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BLACKWOOD'S MAGAZINE

Published monthly at New York, N. Y., for October 1, 1920.

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BLACKWOOD'S MAGAZINE

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No. MCCLXI. NOVEMBER 1920. VOL. CCVIII.

MAHSUDLAND, 1919-1920.

BY GANPAT.

CHAPTER V.—THE WAY OF AN EAGLE.

In the old swanky days before the Great War, the mounted arm, with its jingle of spur and glint of shoulder-chain, was sometimes referred to as "the eyes and ears of the Army." Since, however, in this labyrinth of hills mounted men are but cumberers of the earth, *bouches inutiles*, our armies of past days moved into the tribal country from India blind and deaf in the face of an enemy who could move three times as fast and see six times as far.

Moreover, since the tribesmen's lashkars could assemble and disperse in little knots and groups of men in stained, grimy, earth-coloured garments, inconspicuous concentration at any point was easy to them; whereas the dense columns of a civilised army, hampered with masses of animal transport, are impossible to hide.

Therefore is it that in taking up your book of frontier expeditions you will read time after time disastrous episodes of rushed camps and convoys, due entirely to the fact that in tribal territory an invading army was, to all intents and purposes, blind.

What time the sternly practical and, be it added, somewhat hide-bound soldiery of the past groped about the hills and valleys and periodically got scuppered, certain much-jeered-at "unpractical dreamers" played about with bits of linen and wire and light wood, studying the ways of the bird in the air, suffering infinite ridicule from the prac-

tically-minded, and periodically meeting with broken necks.

But the dreamers, after the eternal manner of dreamers, persevered until in the fulness of time, in the cool clearness of a northern Indian morning, some ancient Henry Farmans swept over Peshawur high above the watching crowds, out into nothingness over the frontier hills, to return later, the rickety old Salmson engines purring contentment at new country seen.

Thereafter, in spite of the protests of the tribesmen deploring their lost advantages, and of the moans of a passing generation of soldiers who, *pace* the shade of Jacob, wept at the sight of science intruding into their "practical" domain of war, the aeroplane came to stop.

Some enthusiastic military writer, probably a sapper, once conferred the title of "The Queen of all Arms" upon what you and I, who belong to it, call the "P.B.I.," the people who do the dirty work, who have to take the hill-tops, and be killed in the process. But the high-sounding title has this underlying basis of reason—viz., that infantry alone can *win* battles—for until the survivors of that cheap form of cannon fodder, the P.B.I., have established themselves on the ground disputed by the enemy, victory is not. Consequently in a well-organised army it must be realised that all the rest—horse, gun, 'plane, and most of all gilded staff—must be the servants of the infantry, and each new arm gains its value in war solely in proportion to the extent to which it can assimilate this lesson.

Naturally the youngsters in the dreamers' service, like youngsters in all walks of life, talked tosh sometimes, but on the whole the Air Force learnt its lesson well, and they did us infantry nobly; and now in this campaign, for the first time in frontier history, we have had better eyes and ears than the enemy, and no story of rushed camp mars our little record.

Wherever the enemy has collected, so invariably by wireless or by streamered message-bag has come the quick instant warning; and never, except as regards small isolated bodies of troops, has the enemy made a surprise.

Some day if the hide-bound listen to the dreamers' plans of wireless telephony, each battalion, yes, even each company, will have its wireless telephone-receiver, and be able to pick up the warning observer's voice from the sky: "195th Infantry, look out! There's about 200 dirty trousered beggars in that nullah 500 yards north of you. Put it across 'em. I'm going to—bomb 'em—so to speak."

Then indeed will the dreamers' triumph over the jeerers be complete and routing, and the price of their toil and labour and sacrificed life be paid a thousandfold in their knowledge of endless numbers of common infantry returning unscathed, who under the older style of warfare would have

been stark mutilated corpses on the hillsides.

Surely a recompense worthy even of a dreamer of dreams.

So it came about that we of the P.B.I., lying out on the glare-swept hillsides, came in time to look upon the Bristol fighters wheeling above as in some sense our guardian angels, whose watchful gaze protected us from surprise rushes of greasy-haired men with knives, and whose stammering Lewis guns and coughing bombs prevented the enemy harrying us too hotly when, at the close of each long weary day, we had to scuttle home to camp once more.

Then the "practical-minded" tried to dream dreams and failed ignominiously, writing inane letters to the papers about the new arm replacing the older ones entirely and destroying towns afar, leaving only devastated wastes of tumbled bricks and mud. Some of the super-optimistic airmen endeavoured to live up to these dreams, "blotting" Kaniguram and Makin with bombs, an attempt doomed to failure from the outset, since it would have required daily flights of scores of heavy bombers over a period of weeks, not merely occasional visits from the dozen or so available light aircraft which happened to be in flying trim.

Even had countless swarms of bombing aircraft, D.H. 10's and Handley-Pages and the like, been available, the result achieved would never have been worth the trouble, since it would only have meant the material destruction of houses, which is no particularly victory-compelling factor in this land, where the bulk of the inhabitants live in caves, and nearly every house falls down when it rains, being mostly made of sun-dried mud.

The only way to win a war is to kill off a sufficiency of the other side with as little loss as possible to your own people. Compliance with this law is, if possible, even more essential in campaigns against the tribesmen than in those against civilised communities.

When the 'planes appear the Mahsud either goes to ground in caves, or takes to the hill-tops around and shoots at the machines above, which sometimes, rather rarely, he hits. When it's all over he returns to his villages, plasters a little mud over any odd bomb-holes in roof or walls, puts out any fodder-heaps or thatching that may have been ignited, and all is as it was, save that the tribesman has been provided free with an excellent Brock's Benefit, and a lot of scrap metal with which to make knives and bullets, and sometimes presented with a few dud bombs, which last reminds me of a tribal feud story.

A certain Shaman Khel Mahsud, whom we will call Abdulla Jan, had on hand a blood-feud. One day the Air Force bombed his village . . . or thereabouts. After the disturbing noise had ceased, poking his nose out of his cave-retreat, Abdulla Jan dis-

covered a large dud bomb. Being of an ingenious turn of mind and skilful with his fingers, he contrived to screw off the head, and removed the detonator, which presumably he did not know how to use.

Remained, therefore, a beautiful, pear-shaped, khaki-painted metal shell, weighing a matter of 50 lbs. or so, filled with explosive of sorts which the finder from his knowledge of country gunpowder imagined would explode on the application of a light.

So calling unto him his Aziz, or darling, the inheritor of his flocks and herds, he said in the vernacular—

"Oh Light of mine eyes, Allah is indeed gracious! The hell-doomed feringi" (here he spat) "has cast this bomb about our tower. As you see, however, the charm of the worthy Pir Sahib has retained the building to us intact. This surely is only just, since the sheep we fed him was fat of loin and tail. But lo! the bomb is with us also.

"Now, oh life of my heart, it seems we can settle the case of Mir Ayub" (here he spat twice with vehemence), "that son of a noseless mother of ill-repute, whose shameless sisters' bestial amours are even now corrupting the devils of the pit. When he and his misbegotten children find themselves hurled from their beds into the abode of shame where they belong, maybe he will remember Abdulla Jan and the matter of that girl of Aka Khel."

The Aziz, a crooked-eyed, greasy-looked youth, murmured piously—

"Inshallah, he will."

Wherefore next night, having covered eighteen miles of hill track, they deposited the bomb with infinite silence and precaution at the base of Mir Ayub's tower, and having lit the rough fuse Abdulla Jan had constructed, removed themselves to a safe distance and waited for justice to be done.

Alas, H.E. does not explode from mere application of flame, it merely burns with an intense vicious glare. Thus, instead of seeing the tower rock on its foundations, and collapse a tumbled heap of mud and stones, burying their enemy's twisted frame under the jagged debris, the two watchers were merely rewarded with a beautiful imitation of a Crystal Palace fire-fountain. In time this died away in silence and black darkness, as, with their high hopes turned to ashes, the erstwhile rejoicing pair withdrew into the frowning hills lest dawn should discover them to their foes, doubtless cursing the feringi more bitterly than ever before.

This story is only remotely connected with the air, but the childlike faith of the two Mahsuds in the misused and little-understood bomb recalls the blathering of certain ignorant people, who tell us that H.E. bombs dropped from aircraft will settle the frontier for ever.

H.E. requires more than mere flame to detonate it.

H.E. also does not kill after it has once burst; and since no sane Mahsud waits in his village to be caught by bombs, the aeroplane H.E. bombs do little killing except in actual battle.

What, to my mind, is required for punitive purposes and town and village strafing, if it can be managed, is large-sized gas-bombs of a clinging lasting type of gas, so that when the tribesman, clapping his hands and laughing over the dud-sounding bombs which have done even less damage than usual to his houses, swarms back in crowds to gather souvenirs, he will die in crowds—he and his ox and his ass, and the stranger (from Kabul) within his gates—slain by a force against which he has no defence, and without the pleasure of cutting up even one single wounded man of the P.B.I.

With the alternatives before him of, on the one hand, leading a peaceful life, tilling his fields, or working honestly on roads or other labour, and on the other of extermination by an irresistible weapon wielded from above, it should not be long before he comes in to hand up his rifle.

Then will the Derajat villager be able to sleep quiet o' nights instead of wondering whether the dawn will see him and his sons lying out with their throats cut, what time his wife and daughters are being hurried into the hills, urged along at the knife-point by a band of leering, lousy cut-throats, their bare feet cut to ribbons on the sharp stones of the foot-hills.

And lastly, the P.B.I. will pay a considerably lower rate of insurance premiums, and the Government of India will save the money which it now has to wring yearly from its scanty budget for expeditions, hospitals, and pensions for the relatives of the said P.B.I.

These articles seem to be continually digressing from the point. I fear I must be suffering from what the Pelmanites call "mind-wandering," and must take firmer hold on this rebellious pen of mine, which I bade a little while back write a few lines on the way of the air in this land of strife.

To revert, therefore, to our Guardian Angels: Derajat Column is nursed from the back of the base, from Mianwali and Bannu and Tank, by certain squadrons of the Air Force, for the most part Bristol Fighters, rather stumpy, two-seater tractors fitted with 250-horse-power Rolls-Royce Falcons.

Since we have established ourselves at Sorarogha, however, about the biggest bit of flat ground in the country, where there is room not only for a large camp all on one level, but also for an aerodrome, the 'planes work from there.

They sail in from Bannu or Tank in the early morning, black silhouettes against the dawn sky, and circling down between the hills, drop gracefully to earth on the dusty aerodrome. Taxying up to the

wire in a trailing cloud of dust, they are greeted by mechanics and gangs of labour-corps men humping bombs and petrol, fill up, get their orders from "Wings," the R.A.F. liaison bloke, and so away to where, 5 or 10 or 15 miles farther along the river, Derajat column is strafing a village, or building a picquet, or trailing its coat for Musa Khan's Abdullai to tread on.

They off-load their bombs, and back to Sorarogha, ten minutes' flight, fill up, and off again on their guardian angel stunts, or on long lone bombing raids, sometimes one, sometimes two, sometimes half a dozen at once.

At other times when trade is slack, they sit on their dumpy tails in the aerodrome what time their owners sleep on the bhoosa bale settees in the La Touche Arms, or play poker while waiting for a job, or for permission to go home.

They are a joyous crowd, these owners of the dumpy Bristols, young for the greater part, speaking a strange tongue bristling with an argot all their own. Sometimes I sit and listen and learn, and what I realised long years ago when first I listened to French people talking in France is borne in on me again, that a new language is not really a different method of saying the same things. It is a different method of saying different things, a medium of expression for minds whose outlook is other than the one in which we've grown up, and which could not express themselves fully in the speech we others use.

"Apprendre une nouvelle langue, c'est gagner une âme nouvelle."

It was Charles V. of Sweden who said that a few hundred years ago, I think, but it seems truer to me each day.

It is a good and chastening experience for one to sit and listen to strangers talking a new language—wherefore I sometimes frequent the meeting-places of the R.A.F., and, being only a common foot-soldier, they treat me kindly, even to the extent of taking me for flips and joy-rides in buses whose owners have nothing important on hand.

So it happened one day that Deracol, having broken up a lot of desirable residences in Makin since the Abdullai refused to make peace, offensively swearing war to the knife, were returning to Dwa Toi. Consequently Sorarogha was extra full of 'planes and pilots and one-winged observers, and one pilot said he would take me to Makin provided—which was doubtful, since both her magnetos were dud—his bus could get there.

Having wrestled for an hour with the mags., they were eventually induced to give forth reluctant sparks, and the engine, having been coaxed into pushing the rev. counter needle a hair's-breadth on the right side of the danger mark, we filled her up with bombs and petrol and pushed off.

Such flying as I had previously indulged in had been in slow-crawling B.E.'s with, in

a manner of speaking, microscopic engines. Consequently the roar of the Rolls-Royce deafened me, and the slip stream pushed me under the seat. Eventually recovering, I climbed up again, tightened my goggles two holes, and, leaning out, saw the Barari Tangi below me, flanked by the little dots of men moving inside the faint shadows that marked the wire. We climbed away as steadily as our consumptive engine would let us, and I hung over the side studying the country below—masses of sunlit, bush-dotted hill and shadowy valleys on either side of the white river-bed, scattered with queer-shaped fields of yellow and green.

We swept low over the Barrier picquets—two little tent-roofed pens on a long knife-edge—up above Table Mountain, and Umbrella, and Egg, and so came to Piazha Raghza Camp, a mass of white canvas and dark clumps of animals and men, on a khaki flat set above the river in a circle of wooded hills.

A mile or more beyond Piazha, the Tank Zam, swinging left-handed to westward, breaks into two arms, the Dara Algad leading north-west to the wide Makin Valley, resort of the very recalcitrant Abdullai clan, and the Baddar Toi, running west to Kaniguram, the junction of the streams marked by a conical hill, topped now by a picquet rejoicing in the name of Oxford Circus.

As we circled twice above the junction I got out my camera and took some photos. Derajat Column had repassed Oxford Circus, and showed as a confused mass setting up camp half a mile along the Baddar Toi, a threat to Kaniguram.

Then we turned northward again, another Bristol winging its homeward way below us, and passed over Marobi, Fazl Din's home, now merely a bare expanse of house plinths, the tall mosque alone standing. Fazl Din's father, the Mullah Powindah, was buried there. I say advisedly *was*, because Fazl Din, judging our manners out of the depths of his own filthy heart, dug up the old sinner's bones from the ziarat, where they reposed in the odour of sanctity (he must have been a first-class villain to have achieved such a reputation for sanctity among the Mahsuds), and carted them off out of our reach.

Of course, since we have to flatten the graves of our dead in Mahsudland, and burn refuse over them to put the tribesmen off the trail lest they disinter and mutilate and heap indignity upon the corpse, I suppose the Mahsud fears our retaliating in kind.

We went one better at Makin, by the way, and buried a British officer killed in the fighting there in a showy grave with white-painted name-board and rails. In the dead of night came a sapper working-party who worked awhile and then departed again with clink of shovel and pick. Then we left Makin, and the Mahsuds,

swarming back, yelped with delight at finding such treasure trove as a perfectly good British officer's grave.

Only the spies saw the rest, but one can imagine the ghoulish delight of the crowd around as the toiling wielders of pick and shovel flung out the yet loose earth. You can hear the high-pitched exclamations of anticipatory pleasure from the women as the blanket swathings just showed through the earth; the thumbs running tentatively over the knife-blades, the children crowding to the merry sight.

Then the breathless moment when the last earth was cleared away and the brawny-armed workers hauled the body into the light of day, and perhaps —who knows?—there was not much time—wondered at its exceeding stiffness ere the 160 slabs of gun-cotton composing the "corpse" went up.

The spies are probably not over-estimating when they say it laid out sixteen men. Methinks the Mahsud will be a little shy of digging up our graves to "be-izzat" our dead in future—and anyway, that officer will lie quiet enough in his unmarked grave a few yards away from the jagged hole with its splinters of wood and railing half buried in the earth pulverised by the high explosive.

The wind sang through the taut flying wires as, climbing anew, we headed north up the Dara Algad and saw broadening in front of us the Makin Valley, a wide vista of comparatively open country, of low rolling hills and sweeps of fields plentifully dotted with houses and towers despite the many destroyed. It was a revelation after the tortuous defiles and saw-bladed crests that make up the first part of Mahsudland.

We headed still more north towards the opening in the hills which runs to the Afghan border, and then—those magnetos did us down. The life went out of the engine, the rev. counter quivered back, and turning, we shot for home.

Marobi passed below us, and as the pilot fought with his toggles to clear the bomb-racks, I watched the long yellow bombs go spinning down to vanish in clouds of thick grey smoke about the ruined houses, and looked in vain for running figures. The earlier birds had evidently scared the worms into cover.

Two hundred odd pounds spelt many feet of lift, and the lightened 'plane climbed up a bit; but there was no thrust in the engine's half-hearted drone, and once again we dropped our nose and on a long slant made for the Barari Tangi.

Scraping over the top of the Bluff picquet, we dived for camp, and, thanks to all the gods who guard the little birds in the air, made the landing-ground in safety.

Makin and back in thirty minutes! It made one think a little of those dreamers and the godlike powers they've put into our hands. Some day when they've dreamed a little more they'll find the true way

of the eagle—of the eagles and hawks and vultures that I watch daily from my tent door as they wheel and circle and pass in long straight flights across the sky, with never a movement of feather or wing save for the occasional flexing to change their course.

No mags. to go wrong there,—true heavier-than-air flight, driven by some as yet undiscovered power which forces the heavy bird through the air at speeds of 40 and 50 miles an hour with no visible expenditure of energy.

Then indeed will the frontier lie in the hollow of our hand at no cost of crashed 'plane and lost life, and we shall at last have finished paying in full the cost of wings and the price of peace in all our borders.

Looking back over this sketch, it seems to me that I have made it appear as though the Bristols were the only 'planes we see. Actually it is otherwise, for from time to time in the earlier days passed strange-shaped, long-nosed craft high overhead, far above the little Bristols. You could hear these ugly giants long before they came within sight, winging their, as it seemed to us below, slow way to Wana or Kaniguram. D.H. 10's they were, De Havillands, strangely lacking in the beauty that one associates with the designs hall-marked by that name, great lanky beasts with double interplane engines, heavy bombers of freak aspect.

D.H. 9's showed sometimes, the metallic roar of the 400-horse Liberty engines distinguishable miles away.

But these larger fowl had no such intimate relations with us as had the Bristols, who were up day in and day out, stunting over our camps, Lewis gunning round about the picquets, hovering handy with bombs where our covering parties lay out ahead of the half-built picquets, lay and listened hour after long-drawn hour to the whispering bullets of the snipers, and longed in vain for something to do to keep them from thinking too much.

The bigger machines merely passed above us, their presence sensed more often by ear than eye, by the far-off droning vibrant hum of the tremendous engines, and the distant deadened crumping of the big bombs far away to westward. Our dwarf stone-scattered bumpy landing-grounds were no use to leviathans like the D.H. 10's, but the dumpy Bristols flopped down on them cheerfully and very rarely crashed.

True, we did have one bad week when four of them lay within a mile circle, scattered in ungraceful attitudes, with buried noses or drunken-looking wings. Even then their luck held, and no one broke his neck, though two sportsmen had to run the gauntlet of the Mahsuds along the river bank, and tumbled into the nearest picquet with a couple of cushy ones apiece in fleshy parts, having considerably lowered the record for the quarter-mile.

This side-show has had many

features out of the ordinary run of frontier campaigns. It has, with the solitary exception of the gun teams of No. 6 Mountain Battery and the Air Force, been a purely Indian Army show from start to finish, with only four frontier force regiments out of the twenty or more engaged.

The battle casualties have been the biggest ever recorded on the frontier, while the sick-rate has been the lowest; and of late, now that frost-bite and pneumonia have vanished from our menu, our sick-list is less than that of many an Indian peace station.

And lastly, it has proved for all time the absolute necessity of plentiful aircraft on the frontier, most of all perhaps in their rôle of guardian angels to the P.B.I. No more shall the sweating columns of infantry stumble blindfold in the maze of frontier hills, but, casting our gaze afar by the eyes of our errant 'planes, we shall move orderly and with method, and our marchings and campings shall be free from that haunting dread of the past on the frontier—the sudden swirl of well-hidden lashkars on unready convoy or camp.

CHAPTER VI.—THE AHNAI FIGHT.

Recently there have been coming up the line daily parties of globe-trotters, chiefly officers of British units newly arrived in India, hidden for the most part under masses of the brilliant-coloured ribbons of every British and foreign Order known to the tailors.

They are sent up in batches by A.H.Q. to see the frontier, presumably so that they may realise that there are certain slight differences between waging war with large masses in the mud of Flanders against dense crowds of semi-trained Huns, and fighting with small bodies of men against mountaineers in their own mountains—mountaineers, moreover, who have each to be a first-class sniper and stalker to keep their lives in their own country even in peace-time.

Having a fictitious reputation for lecturing ability, or, as my friends say, an infinite capacity for diffusing hot air of the worst type, it has been my fate to be detailed to conduct these parties over our sector, and in particular to show them over the ground of the Ahnai fighting.

After a few days of this dragoman's work it occurred to me that this series of sketches would be incomplete without some account of what, in Sir Nigel's words, we might describe as "a certain small bickering" which took place in the long rock narrows of the Tank Zam known as the Ahnai Tangi.

So, climbing one day to Flathead, I sat down a while and, looking round over Duke's Nose and Ahnai, Asa Khan and Dazzle Hill, Marble Arch and Plateau, sorted out my

crowded jigsaw memories, jotting them down as coherently and consecutively as possible from the overture of concentrated camel at Seven Dials to the finale at blood-stained, crowded Asa Khan.

. . . . . .

The mess was comparatively speaking gloomy—not surprising, considering the weeness and smallness of the hour, the clinging cold, and the fact that the battalion had spent the night in an isolated camp known, presumably from its general slumminess, as "Seven Dials," guarding the bulk of the camel transport of Derajat Column.

All night nigh upon 2000 close-packed camels had exuded perfume of the choicest in the midst of where we, the "nth P.B.I." (Nobody's Own) were spread over an exiguous perimeter, poorly camouflaged with a strand and a half of wire, dominated on one side by the steepest of hills, at whose cup-like foot nestled the camp, and up whose bald stony slopes ran the said exiguous perimeter.

The little camp was one crammed mass of camels and camel refuse, covering a minuscule kach, in one corner whereof the last occupants had thoughtfully left us a charming series of deep-dug graves, into which we retired gratefully later, for Seven Dials had an undesirable reputation for sniping most nights.

Deracol's Camp lay one and a half to two miles ahead, and at 6 A.M. we were to push off all the transport from our camp with two companies (that was my job) as baggage-guard to join the column as it debouched from what was euphemistically known as Ahnai Camp. Thereafter the column was to force its way farther up-stream in the narrow passage that succeeds the mouth of the Ahnai Tangi, the actual entrance to which a really brilliantly conceived and executed night advance had given us for next to no casualties three days earlier.

The C.O., with the other two companies, was to do rear-guard up as far as the entrance to the tangi, where he would join the main body of the column, rearguard being taken over by the 57th Rifles, who with the 2/9th Gurkhas were picqueting either side of the stream up to the tangi mouth.

The sequel lay on the knees of the gods. The general plan of operations to be carried out by the bulk of the column was that the advance-guard, consisting of the 1/55th Coke's Rifles, more usually known as "Cookie's," should enter the tangi under cover of the already established picquets of Ahnai Left and Right, and then push on, dropping picquets on the right bank (left as we advanced) in the usual frontier way.

The left bank is far higher than the right, and most precipitous, being in parts utterly unclimbable, and any height from 400 to 800 feet up from the water-level. To deal with this side, therefore, H.Q. and two companies 2/5th Gurkhas were detailed as special right-

flank guard to advance from Ahnai Right picquet. Up to that point they would be under cover of the permanent picquets and of the picquets put out by the 57th Wilde's Rifles as far as the tangi. From there they were to advance along this high ground, their head level with the advance-guard, dropping picquets as they went.

The rest of the column—to wit, two sections No. 27 Mountain Battery, a section of No. 6 Howitzer Battery, and the 2/76th Punjabis, together with the 3/34th Sikh Pioneers and the miscellaneous collection of sappers and miners, signal units, and so forth, which made up "column troops"—formed the main body, while close up behind them was to march the transport.

The column commander had announced in orders that he hoped to inflict severe punishment on the enemy, who, Mahsud and Wana Wazir alike, were collected in large numbers to oppose our advance, and by the end of a day that was a stand-up infantry fight from early morning till dark, he did so, the most excellent hammering that the Mahsud has ever had.

But we, the cane in the General's hand, felt a trifle squeamish before dawn, for the thought of possible horsehair is always present, even if only subconsciously, in a cane's mind ere the punishing process begins.

As I have said, the mess was, comparatively speaking, gloomy. Shortleigh was reiterating the fact that it was Wednesday, and that his memsahib would be especially and frightfully annoyed if he was killed on a Wednesday—Wednesday the 14th in particular. He always tells us this before a show; last time I remember he quoted Friday the 9th as a date when if he should stop one his better-half would be doubly and trebly peeved.

There was a subdued air of depression and camel over the whole of breakfast; even the C.O. seemed obsessed by it, while the Quartermonger wrestling with baggage tables was distinctly fractious, having mislaid half a camel or a mule and a quarter, I forget precisely which.

Probably it was the stuffy atmosphere of the deep graves in camel-soiled ground wherein we had slept that preyed upon us, but undoubtedly breakfast was not the social success it usually is in Nobody's Own, even before the luridest of shows. People made uncharitable livery remarks about the quality of the food, while the signalling officer was positively rude concerning the cocoa—so rude as to make even our mild-mannered doctor and mess president almost take offence.

Eventually we dispersed into the gloom of dawn to sort out camels and mules, and generally get a move on things. Life was further brightened at the last moment by the discovery that the wily sappers had dumped a hundred loads of R.E. stores the previous day and left *us* to pack them. However, it was an excuse for us to lose further our already

lost tempers, and by the time that lot was loaded up and the camels on the move, it was broad daylight, and we peeled off an outer layer of thick clothing and began to feel better.

A and B companies, the Rajputanas and the Dekhani Mahrattas, were my children for the day, the C.O. having annexed the Konkani Mahrattas and the Punjabi Mussalmans.

Having given some incoherent orders of the "carry on in column of lumps" type to Jacob and Shortleigh, my respective company commanders—about the only thing to do when you're baggage-guard for a few miles of camel—and seen them started off, I climbed on to Lady Nan's back and rode forth into the river, where various transport officers were busy assembling camels of which the river-bed was full, a great dense mass. Presently I let them go and they headed up-stream four and five rows abreast, being reinforced on the left after we had gone a mile or so, by the long strings and columns of dark mules and tawny camels spat out unceasingly by Dera Col Camp from the nullahs about Gana Kach as an ant-heap vomits forth ants.

Where the two flows coalesced, the pace slowed a trifle as each string made for the shallower bits of the streams, and sulphurous-mouthed transport personnel struggled to keep their flocks together, each his own. The ammunition column fouled the R.E. park, and the supply crowd cut a diagonal line across both, while into the resultant whirlpool swirled Cookie's second-line camels under a joyously Bolshevik baggage-guard, caring naught for any man, so that their sahibs' kit headed the procession.

The brigade transport officer, on a tall bead-bedecked riding camel, swept into the mêlée with a stock-whip, restoring order, and the whirlpool flattened out again to a smooth-flowing stream, until the hills closed in on the river, and lo! above us, Ahnai Left and Right picquets, and between them the tangi mouth.

Picture to yourself three hundred-foot walls of stratified limestone heaved up on end and slit across the centre by a fifty-foot gap, through which boils the pent-up volume of the Tank Zam, crystal-clear save where it breaks into spatter of foam, glinting in the sunlight under the heavy shadows of the rocks, for the sun is not yet high.

Through this gap is filing a column of 2800 camels and over 2000 mules—a column suddenly compelled to close from a fifty-yard front to a thirty-foot one. Fill up the interstices between the splashing camels' legs with splashing men, sarwans, mule drabis, baggage-guard sepoys, followers of all sorts, and dot the edges of the moving mass with vociferous transport officers and N.C.O.'s, British and Indian, strenuously endeavouring to keep control of the traffic.

Throw in a few wounded

men, being slid—there is no other word—down the steep path from Ahnai Right: the special right-flank guard were hard at it by now, and for incidental music imagine the chattering of the Lewis guns in Ahnai Left overhead, mingled with the deadened crash of guns and aeroplane bombs somewhere round the corner in front.

You will then have something like the Ahnai Tangi as we struck it about 8.30 A.M. on 14th January.

Lady Nan squeezed her way through between the outside camels and the rough rock walls, and we pushed along the widening river-bed for half a mile to where, the head of the transport having halted, the river was filling with camels, as a stream fills its banks when you dam it.

On the right, high precipitous cliffs towering above us—easily the highest we'd yet seen—rose Flathead Left, the culminating point of the long unbroken rock wall which encloses the river from Ahnai Right to the gap at Marble Arch: 800 feet above the river we found it to be when the survey section mapped that stretch later.

A little in front of the halted camels the guns were in action at point-blank range in the river-bed, while on the nearer heights of Flathead Left clusters of figures worked along the skyline or below the crest; and in front of them, half-right above us, showed from time to time other figures, whose bullets sang on the gun-shields, and splashed on the rocks, and whined and plunked round about the camels. To left, on the far lower right bank, little picquets of Cookie's were sangaring themselves in and fighting duels with hidden snipers.

The shells burst incessantly in front, 600, 700, 800 yards from the gun muzzles—open sights in the open—while overhead, circling low above the packed amphitheatre where Deracol, cooped up, was fighting its way up the slopes for literal life, two droning 'planes added to the din with crash of long yellow bomb and cackle of Lewis gun. Unless we could make good those frowning hill-tops we were in for disaster.

My friend the brigade transport officer pushed his great bead-bedecked riding camel up to me through the crush and shouted—one had to shout in that noisy corner—"The blighters are killing my camels!" I can see his surprised indignant face still. *His* camels, mark you,—a silladar corps whose beasts were as the apples of their owner's eyes—none of your mere Government cattle—and here were the dirty Mahsuds killing them—d—— their necks!

Then he departed again, and later I caught sight of him parking his beloved beasts under a sheer wall of rock 500 feet high called Duke's Nose, where they could only get shot into from one and a half sides instead of three, and thereafter he seemed happier.

Jacob I located presently at the head of the jam, quiet as ever, and bade him get his men across the Sarwek nullah on the left to strengthen Cookie's picquets in case of trouble that side, for although there was so far no movement, there was much noise, and the little picquets on the bank fired incessantly in reply to a dispersed cloud of snipers who shot methodically at everything appearing above the bank.

Then I pushed forward in search of news to where the guns spat cheerfully in the open river-bed, 300 yards behind the advance-guard. Beyond Flathead Left, and hidden by it until you reach its very foot, stands another higher hill, christened Flathead Right, and between the two is a steep drop into a nullah, of whose existence you have no clue until you tumble down its convex sides.

We had no maps of Mahsudland other than the rough small-scale sketches made presumably on the previous expeditions of the 'sixties and 'nineties — the sort of maps General d'Audel in his classic work on the art of war advises every pushful young officer to keep by him to impress inspecting Generals—a general-service class of map which, with the alteration of a few names, will do equally well for Waziristan or the Sahara.

Nowadays we have excellent maps, for a keen survey party came with us and produced at lightning speed quite accurate contoured sketch-maps, followed by more detailed surveys. The trade-mark of the Survey of India is a large white plane table surmounted by a still larger white brolly rampant. I speak but sober truth when I say that with mine own astonished eyes have I seen this amazing target proceeding into the very firing line of the covering troops during a rather messy picquet show, in order to sketch the enemy's side of the ridge. They had, however, the sense to furl the umbrella while at work.

This, however, is a digression. To revert to Flathead, of which we had no maps, when the advance-guard of Cookie's reached the foot of the far end of Flathead Left, they came upon the deep nullah opening to their right between the two hills, and further found it full of Mahsuds. So Cookie's (with their attachés, the South Waziristan Militia) and the Mahsud and Wana Wazir smote each other good and proper, killing at point-blank range round the rocks and boulders that cluster the precipitous foot of Flathead.

From Marble Arch, 800 yards farther on, an enormous limestone half-moon-shaped cliff with a base of hollowed caves, Mahsud dwellings, the enemy showered them with lead, and the red-and-white rocks of Cockscomb, nearer still, seethed with angry snipers. So there the advance-guard stuck, across the river from the foot of Flathead up on to the right bank, for on their right the special flank guard, found as you may remember by the 2/5th Gurkhas, was held and forced back.

These latter had made their way over the brow of Flathead Left and started down the dip into the nullah between the Flatheads. Then the Mahsud fell upon them in force, and they fought hand to hand, bayonet and kukri and knife, ay, and jagged stone as well, as happens when men get down to really primeval killing.

But the odds were too heavy, even apart from the fact that the 2/5th had been dropping piquets all the way along from Ahnai Right; so the two shattered companies of the special flank guard had to rally and cling to the crest of Flathead Left, whence they had started down, with their C.O., Crowdy, and their leading company commander dead. I think this was the one who was picked up later with seven knife-thrusts in his body, evidence of the bitterness of the fighting.

It was at this stage of the proceedings, when the remnants of the 2/5th were fighting about the knoll of Flathead Left,—for the Mahsud, as ever, emboldened by success, had leapt into the counter-attack, while the guns clamoured away in the vicinity of the tower and villagelet of Asa Khan, which stood on a tiny kach in a nullah running out at right angles opposite to Flathead,—that I came upon Shortleigh talking to a Q. staff officer.

A staff officer's duty is to keep up the *moral* of the troops when things go wrong, and some achieve it by an optimistic cheerfulness that becomes the cheerier the worse things really are. But this Q. officer, being gifted by nature with a visage of preternatural gloominess, had devised another plan of raising people's spirits, one of distinct originality. It is noteworthy that if you appear as reasonably downcast as the situation demands, you immediately depress all those with whom you come into contact; whereas, if you can only muster a fictitious look of exaggerated depression, you at once raise their spirits by making them feel that bad as things may be they *can't* possibly be as bad as you *look*.

Seven Dials was, as I have already mentioned, a bad camp, snipeable and sniped, rushable though—*Dieu merci!*—never rushed, badly lacking in wire, and commanded from most points of the compass. When we first entered it and sat on our kit waiting for the mess mules, we looked at the camp, and smelt it, and tasted it, for the air was solid camel, and thereafter felt depressed

beyond words. Then there happened on the scene this Q. bird with his detached air of Stygian gloom, and conversed in despondent funereal tones, his muted manner implying that if by any extraordinary chance we were not souppered before nightfall, we certainly would be by midnight. I'm not sure if he offered to take charge of our wills and post farewell letters for us from Ahnai Camp, but he probably did. Any way, when he left us we were positively hilariously cheerful instead of being somewhat dismal, as he had found us.

On this occasion he was directing Shortleigh, and any other British officers he could find, to collect every single man with a rifle that they could lay hands on, form them into groups, and cram them into the mouths of the two big nullahs on the right bank southward of Asa Khan, where, as I have said, sniping was assiduous. It was a sound tactical move, for an attack on our rear was quite likely, since the Mahsud had us bottled up in a distinctly sticky place. Somehow or other, he handled this rather ticklish business so skilfully in his dry despondent way that no one took alarm, and there was not the least suspicion of panic—which is no mean feat, as any one can realise who has endeavoured to collect debris to deal with trouble behind what time the main body is catching it hot in front.

Column H.Q. had by now realised that further advance was impossible until the peak of Flathead Left was made good beyond danger of loss, and so sent up the second in command of the 2/76th Punjabis with a company to take charge of the remains of the 2/5th Gurkhas and command the Flathead battle.

Up the hill he shinned with his following, 800 feet of slithery rock, and arrived at the knoll where now stands Flathead picquet. It took him about half a minute to size up the situation, and, paraphrasing Cæsar, he signalled down "Veni, Vidi, N.B.G.," or words to that effect, planted his company round about him under what cover he could find, and, squatting under a rock in the midst of a hai of sniping, sucked his pipe philoso phically, waiting, Micawber-like, for something to turn up.

It turned up eventually in the shape of H.Q. and the remaining three companies of his regiment under the C.O., Lieut.-Col. Chamberlayne, all that column H.Q. had now got left unemployed in the main body. They arrived shortly after midday, and deployed themselves into attacking formation to go down into the dip which the Gurkhas had failed to clear. They had to do it entirely on their own, for Flathead Left, rising sheer above the guns in the river, precluded any covering artillery fire being brought to bear on Flathead Right, and there were no machine-guns or trench-mortars on this show.

It was a project conceived in high soldierly spirit, standing about a 1 per cent chance of being successful. They made 150 yards out of the 1200 they had to go for a matter of sixty casualties. This was the first easy 150 yards prior to the descent down the convex slope into the nullah, where the serious work began. The nullah swarmed with Mahsuds waiting for them to come down and be cut up, and the opposite hill was crammed with marksmen slating them where they lay.

So they wisely decided to give up the advance, and settled down on the edge of the dip to hold Flathead, and there they lay all day into the dark, until the Gurkhas behind them, reinforced later by a company of the 2/9th Gurkhas, clinging to the knoll and sniped without respite, fashioned themselves the ghost of a picquet.

It is a little epic, that day of the 2/76th Punjabis on Flathead. They were a very very young second-line battalion, and they bumped into a fight such as the oldest of veteran frontier-force battalions had never even dreamt of.

Nevertheless, they attacked with go, when bidden, and when told to hang on, hung on to what they had got, exposed hour after hour to incessant torment of snipers' bullets; while from time to time the prone line of men huddled behind rocks and stones would swirl into sudden movement, as a rush of Mahsuds came up one or other of the nullahs and folds leading unseen to the very crest-line.

But they stuck grimly to their ground the whole of that weary hard-fought day, doing all that men could do—just sticking it, and dying in the process.

That intrepid fighter their C.O., who made them the fine battalion they are, lay dead under the little thorn-bush below the crest; Riddell, mortally wounded, lay dying on the kach below; and minute after minute added to the growing roll of dead and wounded Sikh, Jat, and Punjabi Mussalman on the sunlit hill-top. The second in command was slid away down the hillside, a keyholed bullet through his thigh; and O'Leary, hit three times in France, was wounded yet again ere later in the day a final bullet killed him.

The little rock-strewn hollow between the forward crest and the knoll where the Gurkhas were trying to make their picquet was choked with dead and dying, and all the while the pitiless bullets from Flathead Right spat down on wounded and unwounded alike, and the air was heavy with reek of blood and acrid bomb-fumes. Five separate times did the Mahsud counter-attack, and five separate times with bullet and butt, bayonet and bomb, did the 2/76th, and later the Gurkha reinforcements for the picquet, hurl him back down the slopes.

As the column commander wired that day, "the safety of

the column depends on the staunchness of the troops," of the P.B.I. on Flathead and elsewhere. Staunch indeed they proved, but none more so than those children of the 2/76th. Evidently they have a tradition of "sticking it" in the 76th, for their first battalion was part of the immortal garrison of Kut.

My two baggage-guard companies sat, one across the Asa Khan nullah, and one over the ridge by the Sarwek nullahs. Presently came a young staff-captain seeking the C.O. With some difficulty he was extricated from the seething mass of restless camels, where he and his two companies had just come in after handing over rearguard to the 57th.

General Skeen himself, standing by Asa Khan tower, pointed out the objective, "Dazzle Hill," what seemed from the river but a low hillock a few hundred yards off, from which incessant bullets swept down the banks of the Asa Khan nullah, where the perimeter would have to be that night, rendering serious work impossible.

"Two companies?" queried the C.O. as he got his orders. Two companies it was, and so away they went diagonally up the bank, Hodkin's Konkani Mahrattas leading with the Babe in the front line, pink of cheek under his high-tied pagri, among his dark-faced men.

Hardly had the rest of the battalion started off for the attack on Dazzle Hill than I was sent for and told to take a company up to Flathead and establish two picquets. Shortleigh's Dekhanis having been seized by Column Headquarters to hold the Asa Khan nullah, I went in search of Jacob and his Rajputanas, and loading up with bombs and tools and picquet stores we scaled our laborious way to the rock pinnacle at the top of Duke's Nose. There the two of us argued mightily as to whether the picquet should be on the top of the rock pinnacle or round its base, and finally, compromising, put a bit in each place. Then leaving the resourceful Jacob with two platoons to establish himself, the rest of us departed in search of another picquet site somewhere between Duke's Nose and the knoll on the far crest of Flathead.

It is one of those bad-stepped hills so common on the frontier, where each bump is overlooked by the next, and you go climbing on and on in a vain search for a spot that isn't commanded at short range. Eventually I selected a poorish enough spot where a Gurkha picquet was lying, and called up Birmingham, Jacob's company officer. This double appearance evidently annoyed a party of enemy concealed in the bushes fringing a nullah 600 yards away, for they commenced to snipe exceedingly viciously, and we understood why the Gurkhas lay so flat.

Birmingham spent a hectic afternoon there, trying to build that picquet, his men pushing up stones in front of them

whenever the sniping permitted; but it was not till dark that he made any real progress, situated as he was on a bare skyline sniped at short range from good cover.

As already mentioned, the hill was a stepped one, and for Birmingham's picquet to be holdable it was essential that the high ground forward should be held. Judge, then, of our dismay at seeing a party of sappers—come up to assist in wiring the Gurkhas' and our picquets—sending down their mules, which with such labour had been dragged up part of the way. They said that the Gurkhas were going to withdraw and not put a picquet on the knoll.

So I went forward up on to the peak, 150 yards in front of which the 2/76th were lying, and had speech with the officer in charge of the Gurkhas. No; he had no intention of withdrawing, but as for *building* a picquet, doubtless such a thing *might* be possible after dark, but at present it was hard enough work merely to *live* on the ridge. And as though to emphasise his words, renewed gusts of lead beat and slashed about the knoll whereon we crouched.

Apparently the sappers had merely been sent off out of the way, since no man could stand up beyond the knoll, and therefore wiring was out of the question.

Feeling more reassured, I struggled back towards the centre of the ridge, where Birmingham's picquet was growing, a stone at a time, the appearance of picquet-building activity having galvanised the enemy into greater expenditure of lead, and their bullets whickered past continually like angry bees.

"Struggle" is a good word to describe our progress about Flathead that day, for in places it was exceeding steep, and how the laden men got over it, cumbered as they were with boxes of bombs and S.A.A., coils of wire and picks and shovels, high Heaven only knows.

The Pioneers' paths run true and smooth from end to end nowadays, hewn out of the rock, but even so I have seen the globe-trotters cling tremulously in places to the rocks, turning their gaze inward lest they grew giddy and fall.

Yet on the 14th, in most cases, we kept our foothold somehow or other, and crept along the shaly rocks, though later in the afternoon we chanced it more frequently, and scurried along the flatter crest to the accompaniment of hissing bullets. One felt that one would risk anything, any number of snipers, rather than face again those heart-breaking clamberings along the rocks under the skyline.

On my way back I stopped to see if I could make out where C and D had got to, but could spot nothing save that a 'plane was bombing and Lewis-gunning heavily into the nullahs at the foot of Dazzle Hill, from which I argued ill for C and D Companies' progress. As I watched, my orderly pointed towards

Marble Arch, northward of Asa Khan, and said a 'plane had just fallen into the river-bed. I couldn't see it, but so it was, a Bristol fighter shot down with a bullet through the petrol pipe. Luckily she crashed only a quarter of a mile in front of the advance-guard, and pilot and observer got in alive, thanks to the assistance of a stout-hearted South Waziri militiaman, who was hit three times while helping them in.

Later I visited the knoll again to ensure that it was held, and found things still the same: the same groups of men flattened in the rocks about the edge holding off the enemy on the right, the same spatter of lead, and down a long green shale-slide, just below us, wounded men of the 2/76th being got away.

Duke's Nose picquet was finished first—not much to look at, but a real wall of stone, and, wondrous to relate, a thin belt of wire, quite the finest thing in picquets at Asa Khan that day. Jacob was putting half his men at the base of the topmost pinnacle, while the rest lay on the flat top of the pinnacle itself, whence you could drop a stone 500 feet sheer into the river-bed. A giddy place indeed, the giddier for the bullets which smacked now and again upon the rocks, though not in large numbers, for Duke's Nose was a comparatively quiet corner that noisy day.

I descended the steep hill-side to the river, and making my way through the streams to column headquarters, asked permission to send more men to strengthan Birmingham's picquet, since it was clear that his defences, when night fell, would be of the scantiest, and the only cure seemed to be to increase his numbers in case of hand-to-hand scuffles during the night.

They told me not to draw on Shortleigh's company, still lying across the Asa Khan nullah, evidently for a last line of defence, but to get men from Battalion H.Q., who would be found on the plateau above between the Sarwek and Asa Khan nullahs.

Thither I went through a mixed mass of mules and men and guns in action, and rows of wounded, up the bank whence I had seen C and D Companies start off four hours earlier. At the top was a little dip where, sheltering from the incessant bullets that, whimpering past like flights of insects, enfiladed the line from Dazzle Hill flank, Battalion H.Q. was resting.

In a few disjointed phrases they told me the bald outlines of their adventures. It had been again a forlorn hope, the objective too far off, the force too small. But it was all there was to spare at the moment, and something had had to be done to render it possible for the pioneers to get the right-bank perimeter into some scratchy form of defensibility ere nightfall.

Alas! the lack of accurate maps helped again to weight the scales. Between Asa Khan and the towering sugar-loaf

mass of Dazzle Hill, 1800 yards, lie two nullahs, the second a great wide cliff-banked ravine, deep as the main river channel.

Men dropped continually as the Konkanis pushed on, the Punjabi company in second line. They cleared the first nullah, down into the second and up to the foot of Dazzle Hill, where a crescent-shaped outcrop of chocolate-hued rock breaks the swelling roundness of the slope.

Then, just as the leading men, pushing up the steep hillside, reached the chocolate rocks, the concealed enemy swarmed out upon them and with bullet and knife forced them down the slope, scattering the hillside with dead and wounded, who, needless to say, died later. The Babe took it first through the arm, and then mercifully through the chest, dropping stone-dead as two of his men tried to haul him away, dropping themselves an instant later.

As the broken remnants of his leading platoons recoiled down the slope, Hodkin evidently tried to break off the fight and get the rest of his people back up the near bank of the nullah to where the supporting Punjabi company lay. But the enemy had massed also in the nullah to his right, unseen of gun and supporting infantry, and as their friends swept out of the chocolate rocks at the foot of the hill, they came in with a rush on the right and mopped up what was left in the nullah.

D Company's leading platoon came into it a little later, and from the high nullah bank shot and bombed down into the Mahsuds, now cutting up the wounded and stripping the dead, and sent them hurrying back to their position among the rocks on the far side; but the damage was done.

Seeing his best subadar drop, Hodkin turned to try and help him out, and so died, after the eternal manner of the P.B.I., quietly, unostentatiously, trying to help some one else out of a hole.

And with him died that day, in similar fashion, a goodly gathering, the pick of C Company, and the rest fell back to the near bank under cover of D Company's fire.

Then further offensive action being hopeless (the intelligence reports put the enemy round the Dazzle Hill flank as somewhere near 1000 strong), C and D Companies of "Nobody's Own" settled down to hold what they had made, while behind them the Pioneers and some of the 55th, and later the 57th, scratched up a rough perimeter. And always from the lower slopes of Dazzle Hill the enemy harassed them with lead, until finally they were withdrawn at nightfall to the comparative quiet of the river-bed.

So, like the 2/76th on the right, only on a smaller scale, "Nobody's Own" cheerfully stuck it out on the left, for "the safety of the column depended entirely on the staunchness of the troops."

After I had explained my errand and given the C.O. a

brief idea of the situation on Flathead, the Jemadar adjutant was sent along to D Company to collect a party to reinforce Birmingham's picquet. Meanwhile, cadging a drink of chlorinated Zam water impregnated with much camel, and a cigarette, from the adjutant, I settled down for five minutes' easy.

The 57th had come in and were taking over the perimeter this side, and things seemed to have steadied somewhat. Just below us, however, in the bed of the stream at the entrance to the Asa Khan nullah, was the finest mix-up imaginable.

The nucleus of it was Asa Khan kach, a medley of field-ambulance tents and wounded, round which revolved a stream of baggage parties hunting kit, and working-parties seeking stores. From the field ambulance to the rock-strewn foot of Flathead, across the stony bed of the river, choking all the streams, was a jammed mass of camels, some laden, some unladen, and a swarm of mules. About Asa Khan itself three sections of guns, more or less back to back, fired steadily —their cocked-up muzzles barely clearing the crowd of men and animals which surged about them.

The small terrace round the tower was column H.Q., and there we could see the anxious little red-tabbed group of the staff. There was not much for them to do just then, with evening coming on apace and every man employed, though Q. side were of course busy trying to evolve some kind of ordered camp out of the chaotic mess around.

High up on Flathead, outlined against the purpling evening sky, could be seen the groups of the picquets from Duke's Nose to the Flathead knoll, but the ground beyond where lay the 2/76th was invisible from the river.

Along the edge of the right bank the 55th and 57th were digging themselves in, and an energetic sapper-and-miner section were trying to wire a bit of ground to our right, doubtless much to the snipers' joy. They got the officer with the section and a couple of his men before nightfall, but little things like that are not allowed to interfere with work carried on by that corps of enthusiasts, the R.E., and the wiring continued into the night.

Time was getting on, so I got to my feet to look for those men I had demanded, and the adjutant got up too, saying, "I'll go and hurry 'em up."

Then another flight of buzzing insects hummed all about us, and two or three men dropped, a pawn or two more in the game gone. But one bullet mortally wounded the adjutant, and so "Nobody's Own" were the poorer by the irreplaceable loss of a first-class, much-loved officer, when half an hour later the soul of yet another brave and courteous gentleman followed the Babe and Hodkin and a hundred more into the purple haze that grew about the distant western hills.

A little later came night, and the fighting died away, though the earlier hours of darkness were lurid with hot spatter of musketry, and jewelled with the topaz and ruby of bursting bombs in the silver setting of Very lights, on the banks of the stream and on the heights of Flathead, whence the 2/76th were withdrawn to camp long after darkness fell, wrapping their dead in blankets and rolling them down the cliff, since there was no road for stretchers, and the single goat-path was mostly blocked with wounded.

The column commander's hope of inflicting severe punishment had been fulfilled, for the tribesmen owned to 400 dead at the end of a stand-up infantry fight, where such advantage of numbers as there was lay on their side, in addition to every advantage of terrain; and by next day they had dispersed and scattered, a beaten foe.

The road into Mahsudland lay open now, after the heaviest fight in all the annals of the frontier, swept clear with, mark you, just common or garden Indian foot of the type of "Nobody's Own."

But sometimes I wonder if, in the lone sleepless hours of that first night at Asa Khan, after the bulk of the firing round the picquets had died away, and the uncanny silence settled down, thinking over the day's work the column commander recalled the proud words of Gaston de Castignac to Eleanor of Guienne as he lay dying, sword in hand, on the road to Palestine—

"The Duchess' road is clear—but the broom? The broom is broken."

And so died.

I should like to think that he did, for to my mind no leader could carry in his heart a finer epitome of the self-sacrificing spirit of the men who died that day to clear the road, and no sane human General lives but must know that at the last he owes *all* to his uncomplaining indomitable infantry.

(To be continued.)

RECOLLECTIONS OF THE EMPRESS EUGÉNIE.

BY ETHEL SMYTH, MUS. DOC.

III.

SOMETIMES, but not often, the Empress would talk about the Prince Imperial, and no one who ever heard it can forget the piteous fall of the phrase by which she always referred to him, "mon petit garçon." The last time I remember her speaking of him was when I came back from Paris last summer, and told her that at that moment every one in France was saying the country was ripe for a Dictator. Rather to my surprise, I noticed she had been meditating this point with reference to her dead son. "If he had lived," she said, pausing between the phrases, . . . "*he* had every quality they needed . . . now might have been his chance . . . but I often say to myself I would rather he is dead than think of him as Emperor. . . ."

Then she began speaking of her past experiences, telling me among other things, that when, after the fall of the Empire, Gambetta came to the front, he informed the Government that he had known nothing whatever about Metz being in danger, whereas the Empress herself had gone into every detail of the investment with him, day by day! But of course the blame was to be hers, and while dragging her in the mud he knew her well enough to count on her silence! It has always made me ache to reflect that many of those who betrayed her must have known her true fibre; but in the moment of danger the legend of the *femme à chiffons* lay conveniently to hand, and was used to destroy her. "Not for one second have I ever regretted losing my throne," she went on, "to think of *his* perhaps going through it all—de passer par là où j'ai du passer . . . . ah!" and her face contracted with an indescribable pain and horror it pierced one to witness. "Je remercie Dieu que cela, au moins, lui a été épargné."

I do not know whether the story of how they found the exact spot where the Prince Imperial was killed in Zululand is well known. I had heard it many years ago, both from Sir Evelyn Wood and Dr Scott, who accompanied the Empress on her sad tour to South Africa; but quite recently I questioned her about it, and all was just as they had related.

The search-party that had been sent out after the disaster to recover the slain Prince's body had marked the spot with a cairn of stones; but by the time the Empress was able to go to Zululand, the jungle

had encroached. Some of the guides hired to lead her to the scene of the disaster had been of the attacking party on that day, and they said her son would never have been killed had they realised who he was, which Sir Evelyn thought probably true. But even these were at a loss to find the cairn.

It appears that the Prince had a passion for violet scent; it was the only toilet accessory of the kind he used—and to think of "mon petit garçon" was to think of that perfume. Suddenly the Empress became aware of a strong smell of violets. "This is the way," she cried, and went off on a line of her own. Sir Evelyn said she tore along like a hound on a trail, stumbling over dead wood and tussocks, her face beaten by the high grass that parted and closed behind her, until, with a loud cry, she fell upon her knees, crying "C'est ici!" . . . And there, hidden in almost impenetrable brushwood, they found the cairn!

The Empress told me that the first whiff of perfume had been so unexpected, so overwhelming, that she thought she was going to faint. But it seemed to drag her along with it; she felt no fatigue, and could have fought her way through that jungle for hours. As I have said, hers was the least imaginative, and apparently the least "psychic" of temperaments, for which reason the story is doubly impressive.

She seems always to have taken interest in Spiritualism, however, though possibly not more than in any other new departure in unexplored regions, for one remembers the *séances* of the spiritualist Home that took place at the Tuileries, and, I think, caused some scandal at the time. She once made me laugh by saying, that in her opinion the spirits invoked by mediums were probably embryonic, undeveloped spirits, since they did such childish things—rapping tables, making chairs walk about, and so forth. I suggested that perhaps the limitations of terrestrial conditions had something to do with it, and that the spirits were obliged to use such means as were to hand in order to attract attention and stimulate investigation—which, I added, they have succeeded in doing, *vide* the Society for Psychical Research. This view—not an original one of course—was evidently new to her, and arrested her attention for the moment, though I expect she speedily relapsed into her own view of the matter, as happens with the old—and not with the old only.

When Home was invited to the palace, she herself decided at the last moment that the *séance* should not take place in her own sitting-room, as originally intended, but in a room at the other end of the building, in which no one ever sat. Ranged against the walls were arm-chairs so heavy that it took two men to move them, and the first thing that

happened was that one of these chairs, raising first its front, then its back legs, came lumbering across the room at a good pace towards Home. Then the chair upon which he himself was sitting rose slowly in the air, the Empress and his neighbour on the other side passing their hands under all the four legs. She also mentioned his having floated out of the window, but I forgot to put down what she said.

While she was holding a *séance* with some other medium a strange incident happened. Bazaine was shut up in Metz at the time, and she asked what exactly was the situation there? A message came through, spelt out by the alphabet: "Ne répondez pas trop tôt au Général B. *zizani* entre les généraux" (*zizani* meaning squabbles and disputes). As it was impossible for any communication from Metz to reach the outside world, she could not make head or tail of the message; but next morning she read in 'The Times' that General Boyer had stolen out of Metz and had passed through Brussels, bearing a letter from Bazaine to herself.

Another spiritualistic story she told me concerned her sister, the Duchess of Alba, to whom, as I have said, she was passionately attached. On her way to Algiers, where she had a series of important functions to perform, she stopped in Madrid to see the Duchess, who was ill, and who begged her to tell her straight out whether she was dying—that being her own conviction. The Empress replied that no one seemed to consider the illness serious, even, let alone likely to end fatally. "She then asked me to promise," said the Empress, "that if ever I should consider her to be dying I would tell her so. . . . I thought a moment, . . . gave her the promise, and left for Algiers, fearing nothing." But while the Empress was in the midst of that ceremonial progress through Algeria, the blow fell. A telegram was put into her hand — the Duchess was dead!

Not long afterwards she was at a *séance* where the medium's efforts resulted in a series of extraordinarily stupid communications; and at last one came through, of which the medium remarked: "This is gibberish; I can't make head or tail of it." The Empress examined the message and found it was in Spanish (a language of which no one present but herself had any knowledge), though all the words ran into each other. Gradually she spelt out the equivalent of the words: "Pourquoi ne m'as tu pas prévenue?"

Another incident she mentioned concerned an equerry of hers called Rainbeaux, of whom one vaguely knew that long ago his sister had died of the plague. At some *séances* or other the words were rapped out: "I was quite conscious when you stood at the door." No one knew for whom this message was intended, and,

when interrogated, the spirit gave some queer name—soon after which Rainbeaux left the *séance*. He subsequently told the Empress that when his sister had fallen ill he had hastened to Paris, but found her practically at the last gasp. And as the nurses told him she was unconscious, and that it was useless his going into the room and spreading the infection, he merely glanced in at the door and went away. The name given by the spirit was a pet name of hers occasionally used in the family.

I had never been able to decide in my mind what part religion played in the Empress's life, and on the whole fancied it was a question of principle with her rather than an inward need and a source of consolation and strength. This, too, was the opinion of my late dearly-loved friend Count Clary, who saw deeply into character, was one of the "enfants de la maison," and who simultaneously adored and defied her. He had always been an unbeliever; but during the course of the long illness that terminated his life two years ago, faith came back to him, and he told me that the joy and thankfulness expressed by the Empress in her letters made it evident that religion had played the same merciful part in her life that it came to play in his.

She was unexpansive on such subjects, and the last person one would feel tempted to discuss religious experiences with; but as for her supposed "bigotry," never was any one more emphatically at the opposite pole.

My first intimation of the fact was in early days during the Adriatic yachting tour, when, in my then High Church zeal, I reminded her that to-morrow was a fast day. "Vous êtes insupportable!" she said; "je l'avais totalement oublié! . . . maintenant il faut s'y conformer!" And, like many Catholics, she detested fish, especially Adriatic fish, which are not in high repute. She had a horror of the conversion of Anglicans to Roman Catholicism, and I used to maintain that, given the claims of her Church to infallibility, this was a most illogical attitude! But, in her, the instinct of loyalty to kith and kin snapped its fingers at religious consistency, and she considered that in nine cases out of ten people can get all that is necessary to salvation out of the religion they were born into.

In those early days I used to sing a good deal at the Abbey Church, which is attached to the monastery she founded in connection with the mausoleum at Farnborough; and if Gregorian music were not now compulsory in R.C. churches, I would pass on to friends of that persuasion the discovery that "O Salutaris Hostia" can be made to fit the tune of "O rest in the Lord" admirably. The organ is in a side chapel, whence the organist—Brother Wilfred

—and I commanded a fine view of the acolytes engaged in fencing-bouts behind the high altar, with the long hooded sticks used for extinguishing the lights; after which they would pass round to their duties in front of the altar with arms folded reverently across the chest. I was surprised that Brother Wilfred uttered no remonstrances; but the Empress said it would be indeed strange if "ces gamins" did not take any available opportunity of relieving the tedium of office. She used to accuse me of religious aggressiveness. Wine always brings out people's main traits, and she declared that after the champagne had gone round twice, the Roman Church invariably managed to get into the conversation somehow! It was her way to throw an occasional English colloquialism into her French, with variants of her own, and on such occasions the remark would be: "Now, don't pick up a quarrel!"

In spite of the crimes of D.O.R.A., her love of England and the English was deep and intelligent. She would even insist that our improvidence is the trait of a strong race, confident in its power to face the future—an aspect of that optimism she so greatly admired, but used to joke about sometimes. "If a man were falling from the top of the Monument," she once said, "you would hear him exclaiming, as he turned in mid-air: 'It'll all come right in the end!'" But she was not prepared to state that optimism was always justified by the event. "Is your husband jealous?" she once asked one of my sisters. "Not at all," said my sister, "English husbands never are!" "No!" replied the Empress, "they always think it's all right, . . . *but it generally isn't.*"

She was fond of pointing out that no nation is less given to prolonged sojourn beside the domestic hearth than the English. "You are always somewhere else," she said, "et voilà le peuple qui ne se lasse pas de chanter à tout propos ''ome sweet 'ome!'" I said: "Nous nous rattrapons dans la théorie!"; and to that she made a reply which I thought very shrewd—that here you have an instance of what foreigners wrongly call English hypocrisy. "It is not hypocrisy," she said, "it is, as you say, that the English don't mix up theory and practice; as do the French, for instance, with their ideas about equality. Equality is evidently contrary to nature, and they try to make of it a basis of material existence!" *In theory*, as I think I said before, she was more or less of a democrat. But reflecting on her golden sincerity, and on her inconsistencies, I remember a certain phrase—part of a prayer that may be found in the preface of H. Brewster's 'L'âme Païenne': "Faîtes que je me contredise souvent . . . afin d'être simple et vrai!"

If the Empress loved Eng-

land, England loved her with an intensity of sympathetic understanding which, I think, would astonish many old French friends of hers who had seen her in the possibly fierce, but above all artificial, light that beat about that particular throne, and met her but seldom in the later decades of her life. I used to notice that all who had known the Emperor spoke of him with that particular inflection of voice that conveys the idea of personal affection more unmistakably than many an asseveration; but no such inflection would accompany their reference to his consort, who seems, in those days, to have lacked the quality of inspiring personal devotion. I have heard her say that, in her position, anything in the nature of favouritism would have been inadmissable; and I have no doubt that the same exaggerated conception of the correct official attitude that was to trouble her relations with her son later on, hampered her unnecessarily during her reign.

Certainly the one exception she made was unfortunate. One can well understand that the brilliant Princess Pauline Metternich—*grande dame*, and exponent of that ancient Austrian Court which had so much prestige for the Empress—would be paramount in the favour of the newly-promoted sovereign; when the crash came, however, among those who dropped her without hesitation—who, even in later years, studiously avoided any marked show of attachment and sympathy—was her former great friend. But neither on this point nor on any other did the Empress show bitterness: "Étant donné les circonstances c'était tout à fait naturel," she would say. . . . And all the time one knew that she herself would have suffered torture and death rather than even seem to fail the fallen.

The human adorable side of her seems but scantly appreciated out of England, and yet I must own that in early days, when she had a Household, more or less, she was not at her happiest in her relations with her Ladies. Here there was nothing human. I do not think that she and Madame Le Breton really liked each other—rather the reverse, though one's impressions were of course indirect. When the latter died, and in her will made absolutely no mention of her Sovereign Lady, the Empress was deeply wounded—and for years there was no mention of Madame Le Breton. But I, who was devoted to both, said to myself, that though to omit that name was a strong measure, the testatrix probably had her reasons. And certainly, had I been the Empress, it would not have surprised me, for if it came to violence of temperament one was a match for the other.

As for the younger ladies, whose brief careers as *demoiselles d'honneur* I had an opportunity of watching, I think that the Empress would

have disliked them, however excellent the qualities they possessed; and I also came to the conclusion that their presence in the house, which decidedly got on her nerves, was a concession to what she imagined would be the views of the English court as to a fitting *entourage* for an ex-Empress. Inasmuch as M. Pietri met all her secretarial requirements, she had no use for a *demoiselle d'honneur* unless to pour out tea, and later on, before Madame d'Attainville practically came to live with her, one or other of a neighbour's daughters used to be telephoned for to do the honours of the tea-table—a far better arrangement, for the Empress always loved young people about her.

If, in the days of the Empire, her choice of a friend seems to have been unfortunate, in later years one could not help marvelling at some of the specimens of humanity she delighted to honour. Of course there are exceptions to all rules, but she, the greatest of great ladies herself, seemed often unable to distinguish between the gentleman and the cad—and their feminine equivalents. In the same way, among her own relations it was not invariably the most delightful that she seemed to prefer, nor the cleverest of whose intelligence she had the highest estimate—and though herself compact of integrity, she was fairly easy to take in. A very little trait or action she disapproved of in any one whose fate she considered linked up with hers, whether by relationship or association, would make her blind, or at least indifferent, to that person's other qualities—and, strange to say, the intensest, most disinterested devotion on their part weighed with her but little. I once told her that a whimsical friend of mine had said he was quite aware that his nephews were civil to him with an eye to his testamentary dispositions, and that this trait, far from annoying him, appeared to him natural and not unseemly; and her comment was: "Il y a du vrai là-dedans!"

Nevertheless, in one case of passionate and disinterested devotion, she was neither unperceptive nor lacking in sense of its value—the case of M. Pietri. She accepted his chaff in the spirit in which it was intended, as a proof of affection, and was marvellously patient when, as would sometimes happen under the stress of gout, his rather violent temper overstepped limits. I shall never forget one such occasion, on which she said to him, quite quietly and rather sadly: "Pietri, vous n'auriez pas parlé de cette façon si j'étais encore aux Tuileries!" In a second he was on his knees at her feet, kissing her hand and begging her pardon, his protestations of remorse and devotion choked by tears. To give an idea of the quality of that devotion, shortly before his last illness he begged that he might be buried under the pathway that leads to the

Crypt; "Thus," he said, "when you go in there to pray beside your dead, your feet will pass over my body."

One of the bitterest experiences of her life, I truly believe, was a sad little tragedy connected with his death. He was away in Paris when his health suddenly failed, . . . and with it his mind. Possessed by the delusion that the people at his hotel were bent on poisoning him, he was brought back by his doctor to Farnborough Hill; "There," he said, "near the Empress, I shall get well in a week." But he did not get well, and, terrible irony of fate, he now became possessed of the idea that she herself was compassing his death.

One day I went over to see him; he appeared to be perfectly sensible and spoke of her as usual, regretting the trouble his illness was giving, and when I went downstairs I found her waiting to hear how I had found him. Then, weeping, she told me that he had suddenly pointed a trembling finger at her and said: "Regardez cette femme vêtue de noir—cette femme à laquelle j'ai voué tout mon respect, toute ma dévotion, toute ma vie . . . pour laquelle, à cette heure-ci, je répandrais volontiers mon sang. . . . Et voilà que maintenant, quand je suis vieux, elle voudrait ma mort . . . qu'elle donne à son chef l'ordre de m'empoisonner!" She said she had taken his hand and cried "Pietri, Pietri! C'est donc que vous ne me connaissez plus. . . . Vous ne savez plus qui parle avec vous en ce moment!" whereupon he lifted his velvet cap from his head, bowed from his arm-chair till the cap touched the ground, and said solemnly: "Je vous connais bien! Vous êtes Sa Majesté l'Impératrice Eugénie!"

The anguish of the Empress at this terrible delusion was painful to witness: "Vous voyez donc," she said, "aucune épreuve ne m'est épargnée!" After his death, which was rather sudden, it touched me even more deeply when she said, like a child, "Tout à la fin il etait bon avec moi . . . il m'a baisé la main, me disant de ne pas le quitter. Mais je lui ai dit qu'il fallait qu'il dorme . . . et une heure après c'était fini." But in her heart she knew, that if any one on earth was sure of her faithful affection —as was she of his—it was Pietri.

They buried him in the spot he had chosen, . . . and the Empress said: "Now the last is gone to whom I could speak of the past without having to explain."

Thinking over her mental equipment, the balance, the depth, the brilliancy of her intellect, the immense amount of common-sense that made her the most invaluable of counsellors, I have often wondered at one trait that would be surprising in a person endowed with less than half her gifts—namely, her liability to *fuss*. I fancy this trait must have been innate, for one re-

members that when Queen Victoria attended the Opera in Paris during the Second Empire, it was noticed that she walked straight up to the front of the box and sat down, without looking round to see what her ladies were, or were not, doing—whereas the Empress could not refrain from indicating to both sets of ladies the special chairs they were to sit upon. In later years this undue preoccupation with detail, this conviction that things had, on the whole, a tendency to go wrong, probably grew on her. Courageous to a fault herself, she was full of terrors for others. If any of her party were motoring, no theory of an ordinary break-down, of a voluntarily extended programme, could prevent her asking every quarter of an hour if they had not yet come back? And though her luncheon visitors from London were invariably taken down to the station in her own car, nothing would persuade her that either they or her chauffeur were capable of calculating time and distance. Half an hour before it was needful she would begin to speed the parting guests, urging that they must not, out of politeness, miss their train; and finally, she would bundle them down to the station, where they were forced to tramp and tramp on the platform—for during war-time waiting-rooms were suppressed—till the train came in. One of the greatest joys of the last year of her life was the visit paid to her by her great hero, Field-Marshal Lord Haig—she herself having superintended the decoration of the front door with evergreens. But I am sure she will not have credited her illustrious visitor with sufficient tactical and strategical skill to catch the 3.42 train at Farnborough.

It is perhaps more reasonable that she did not trust English trains to start without giving warning—though this dignified style of departure is practised at the great London termini rather than in the country. I remember once her accompanying me down to Farnborough station, whither I was going to catch a passing glimpse of Lady Ponsonby on her way to Osborne, and how the Empress endeavoured to embrace the traveller from the platform, standing, for safety, so far away from the carriage that my sister and I were privately considering how best to catch Lady Ponsonby in our arms when the inevitable disaster should take place. It was a most absurd and touching spectacle, one of them so overwhelmed, both of them so affectionate, and all four of us so frightened, . . but the scene ended happily.

Of course the Empress was an ardent suffragist. During the fight for the Vote I saw little of her; I think she took two of her long voyages in successive years. Being ostentatiously law-abiding in her sentiments, she disapproved, theoretically, of militant methods. All the same, I can-

not but suspect that certain chords in her nature must have responded sympathetically to Militancy. People have said that women's services during the war would have won them the vote without violent methods: the answer to that is, that one could not base one's tactics on an event which none of our most sapient statesmen foresaw. This the Empress allowed, but none the less continued to say: "Moi, je suis contre la violence, vous savez." And meanwhile she expressed a strong desire to make the acquaintance of the Militant Leader!

Never have I seen the Empress more utterly bowled over, if I may use the expression, than by Mrs Pankhurst. The gentle manner, the quiet authority, the immense radical good sense that veils the violence of that fiery spirit, . . . and, I must add, the daintiness and good taste of her clothes, captivated the Empress at first sight, and I was entreated to bring her to luncheon as often as possible. On labour questions she was the Empress's last Court of Appeal, and a dozen times she has said how fantastic it was that under our constitution no use could be made of so statesmanlike a brain. I said that Ministers would doubtless shrink in horror from the idea of anti-compromise incarnate seated at the council board; whereupon she shrugged her shoulders and remarked that responsibility begets moderation only too rapidly, . . . "Eux-mêmes mettent assez d'eau dans leur vin, il me semble!" she said.

I must add that her feelings of respect and admiration were fully reciprocated, and once or twice, when she emitted some view that I knew her visitor disagreed with, I was surprised that Mrs Pankhurst held her hand from ever so gentle a slaughter. "I couldn't dispute with her," she explained afterwards. "She is large-minded and generous enough in argument as it is." And, indeed, I never saw the Empress more utterly adorable with any one than she was with Mrs Pankhurst.

One of the most interesting conversations I ever had with her was last year, about the son of the great Napoleon, the Duc de Reichstadt. Antonia had been showing his death-mask, which is in the museum in the park, to some Spanish visitors, calling their attention to its resemblance with the present King of Spain; and I asked the Empress casually if she really thought the Duc de Reichstadt had been poisoned? This is one of the statements that Count d'Hérisson puts into her mouth in his abominable book 'Napoleon IV.,' and given her cult for the Hapsburgs, I thought it unlikely that she had ever said anything of the kind.

The question elicited an extraordinarily interesting reply, which I will epitomise.

Long ago, in the days of the Empire, the Empress had made the acquaintance of a certain Count Prokesch, then

a very old man, who had been in the Duc de Reichstadt's regiment. He was one of his closest personal friends, and gave her many details respecting the Duc's life at the Court of the Emperor Francis. Marie Louise was then living in Italy with Count Neipperg, and her son was never allowed to visit her, but occasionally she came to Vienna and saw him there. His name, of course, was Napoleon, but that word was never uttered, and he was supposed not to know that he was the great Emperor's son.

At this point I asked the Empress if she believed the concealment of such a fact was possible, recalling that a certain illegitimate child at a boarding-school I was at was supposed by our schoolmistress to be ignorant of what was delicately called her "misfortune," but, as a matter of fact, knew all about it. The Empress said she imagined it must have been thus with the Duc de Reichstadt, but Prokesch had told her that not a soul about that Court dared to mention the dreadful name of Napoleon even in a dream, so terrific was the ban placed upon it by Metternich. Strange to say, the young Duke was far more beloved and petted by his grandfather than all the rest of the Imperial children, and, as a concession to his passionate love of soldiering, the Emperor gave him one of his most famous mounted regiments of the Guard, and had it re-christened "The Duc de Reichstadt's Own" (or whatever is the Austrian equivalent of such a title).

Then came a crisis in the life of the unfortunate *Aiglon;* he persuaded the Emperor to come and see the regiment manœuvre, after which he rode up to receive his congratulations, and for a while moved along with the Imperial Staff in a line parallel to that which the troops were taking. Turning his horse to resume his post at the head of the regiment, he found that a wide ditch lay between them. He was a very fine horseman. . . . "Comme l'a été mon petit garçon," said the Empress, with the sad, lingering inflection her voice took whenever she mentioned the Prince Imperial, . . . and, setting his horse at the obstacle, he cleared it with such dash and grace that, moved to sudden admiration, the regiment shouted as one man—

"Vive Napoléon!"

This was almost a penal offence; the regiment was taken from him and bidden to resume its old name. . . . This by order of the all-powerful Minister, Metternich.

From that moment, Prokesch said, the falseness of the young Duke's position, the hopelessness of his fate, seemed suddenly to dawn upon him; it was as if some vital chord had snapped. He languished, became a prey to settled melancholy, and the seeds of tuberculosis, which had always been latent, developed so rapidly, that the world believed he had been poisoned.

Later on in that conversa-

tion the Empress told me that, when at the Tuileries, she had seen a diary of Marie Louise that was evidently genuine, and from which one gathered that her nature was romantic and sentimental to the last degree. Moreover, she had been brought up to abjure any characteristics or preferences of her own, even more than are other princesses—fashioned, in short, to fit in anywhere; and once she had seen Neipperg, she desired never to hear Napoleon's name mentioned. As for her supposed longing to join him at St Helena—a touching legend which was put about in defence of that least sympathetic of royal ladies, and, as we know, encouraged by the Prisoner of St Helena himself—never was anything farther from the truth!

Speaking of other legends such as posterity is apt to weave around certain crowned heads, the Empress once made me laugh about her own mother-in-law, *La Reine Hortense*. We outsiders have always imagined that the life of this deeply-tried Queen was a record of unbroken melancholy; but, according to the Empress, a gayer, more pleasure-loving nature never existed. The harps and willow-trees were embellishments added by sentimental commentators: "C'était de son époque," she remarked, "il fallait à ce temps-là que toutes les femmes fondissent en pleurs"; and I must add that the Empress had nothing but sympathy for people who, in spite of slings and arrows, make the best of things, and get as much distraction out of life as possible.

She herself was one of the most fundamentally serious natures I have ever known, and I cannot imagine that she would ever have found relief from sorrow in what are called "les distractions." Fate drove her back, with blow after blow, upon her ultimate reserves, and fortunately these were many and reliable. Without wishing to appear unduly cynical, foremost among these I must place the possession of a very large private fortune. But what must have helped her as much as anything was her inexhaustible interest in life itself, whether abstract questions, history, politics, or the lives of others. She never seemed to me to think of herself at all, not to pity herself, not to consider herself in any way. She endured, . . . and went on. I have seen her in all sorts of situations and in various moods; in what I cannot describe as other than the highest spirits, . . . and in what, with equal sincerity, must be called a bad temper. But never once have I heard her utter a mean or ungenerous thought.

Be her weaknesses what they may—and I have never seen any of the slightest consequence—the extreme nobility of her nature, together with her flawless kindness, remain the master impressions. Her manners were perfect, because she was never thinking of herself, and was quick beyond belief to guess the feelings of

others. If she thought she had given, whether inadvertently or in the heat of argument, the very slightest pain, or even a passing wound to vanity, no trouble was too great for her to take in order to soothe that person's ruffled feelings. And if one had no other friend in the world to whom to turn in trouble, to her one could turn with confidence. All she did was done on grand lines—no hanging back, no half measures, not the faintest desire for commendation or applause, and very little expectation of gratitude. Her generosity in money matters was unbounded, her charities unlimited,[1] . . . but the world heard nothing of these things. Only the other day I was staggered to learn what immense sums she had given to hospitals in France, both French and Spanish, during the war; but the beneficiaries were sternly forbidden to publish the facts, . . . which both my informant and I thought was a pity.

When the Germans invaded Belgium, the head of the Bonaparte family and his wife were bidden to consider Farnborough Hill their home, and there they, their children and their servants, lived till peace was signed. It was only natural; no one could desire that it should be otherwise. Yet I often wondered how many ladies of ninety would accommodate themselves so simply, naturally, and generously to a situation that changed their habits, root and branch. The Empress spoke freely before those in whose discretion she had complete confidence; but in all those five years the only comment I heard escape her lips was a perpetual fear that her guests were bored to death, and a regret that it was out of her power, given war-time conditions, to do anything to alleviate that boredom.

And all this time a shadow worse than death hung over her, . . . for she was called upon to face the probability of total blindness. She had been one of the most assiduous readers I have known—not of novels, for which she had a contempt as unreasonable as it was adamantine, but of stiff books which most people would have thought twice about tackling. True, she was immensely fond of conversation and of company; but the relations and intimates she was accustomed to receive as guests, year after year, were now out of her reach. For one thing, Governments discouraged private travelling; for another, there was now no room for guests at Farnborough Hill. Even from such distraction as casual English visitors might have afforded her she found herself debarred, . . . for who had time or petrol for visiting in those days? It may be imagined, therefore, what it meant to her to be deprived of books, and unfortunately she could not bear to be read

[1] The Empress left one million francs to charities in her Will.

to, . . . yet no one ever heard her grumble.

Once, when a cold confined her upstairs, I found her and her old maid, Aline, who had been with her at the Tuileries, busy pasting ancient cuttings from newspapers into huge scrap-books. The maid, far more shaky than the mistress, but at least in possession of her eyesight, was on all-fours on the floor; the Empress, seated in her chair, was pointing with a stick to the cuttings she wished pasted into a particular place — occasionally, under the influence of an attack of mistrust, insisting on having the whole monstrous book lifted on to the table, and seizing the paste-brush herself. But gently, firmly, with Tuileries courtesy, Aline would intervene: "Non, Majesté, . . . pas comme cela, . . . c'est tout à fait de travers"; and with the same gentle firmness the book would be removed, the brush extricated from the Empress's obstinately clutching fingers, and the former operator would resume operations. Whereupon the Empress would shrug her shoulders. "Aline croit toujours qu'il n'y a qu'elle pour bien faire les choses!" she would say, and resign herself to the inevitable. The relation between those two always touched and amused me deeply.

Only once do I remember the Empress seeming to pity herself. She had always detested needlework, but now took to knitting comforters and cholera-belts for her wounded officers. I cannot say these efforts progressed very quickly, and the aid of Aline and her other maid was invoked at the finishing-off parts and other crises. One day when I went into her sitting-room she was busily rolling into a ball a skein of wool that was stretched across two chair-backs: "Vous voyez à quoi je suis réduite," she said. It stabbed one's heart to hear her. She knew that, . . . and that is why she never complained.

Of her amazing physical vigour at ninety-three the following adventure will give an idea. She had been going upstairs to dress for dinner, and, arrived at the top, thought there was still a step. Finding none, in order to avoid falling on her face, she hurled herself backwards with such violence that she fell down the whole flight, her head bumping on each of its twelve steps. Her rheumatic wrists were slightly sprained and she could not get up, but luckily Antonia and Aline heard her cries for help and picked her up. She hated a fuss being made over her, and was not feeling in the least inclined to faint. When, therefore, Aline reappeared with a glass of cognac, she was so provoked, and rejected the stimulant with such emphasis, that it flew over the banisters, glass and all.

Up to a few years ago time had left but little mark on her, and there was no diminution of her beauty—the touching majestic beauty of a once supremely beautiful woman who, if I may again quote Lord Rosebery's dedication, had

"lived on the summits of spendour, sorrow, and catastrophe with supreme dignity and courage." The face was of the pallor of ivory, the figure full and gracious, and in spite of her rheumatism she was erect and active. But within the last five or six years she became smaller and thinner, also rather deaf, and with the oncoming of blindness she began to stoop; but one always felt it was because she chose to, rather than because it was inevitable. And, strange to relate, in spite of her blindness, if some small catastrophe happened, a tiny crack in a huge plate-glass window, for instance, which it was hoped would escape her notice, the event proved the vainness of that hope. To the last, in moments of fire—and at least one such occurred whenever one saw her—forty years would fall from her like a garment. Forty? That is to understate the case. . . . Let us rather say sixty! Personally, I never got accustomed to this transfiguration, and was always amazed afresh when it happened.

The very last time I saw her, in November 1919, it was a bright sunny day and she had just come in from the garden. She had on a new hat, and looked so magnificent that I stood astonished on the threshold. Whereupon she cried out, "Qu' avez-vous donc? Entrez—entrez!" It would have been impossible to give the real reason of that pause, for, to her, the association of old age and beauty was ludicrous, but an allusion to the loveliness of the hat was well received. That vision was so striking that I recorded the impression in my diary, little thinking it was to be the last. And when in June news came of the success of the operation, I had been counting, as never before, on seeing her again in a week or two . . . younger and more radiant than ever in the triumph of her recovered sight!

. . . . . .

Going for the last time through what I have written, and considering the lines in the portrait here attempted, I see that I have spoken more than once of the brilliancy of the Empress's intellect, yet seem to have dwelt chiefly on its lapses! . . .

This is inevitable. She wrote no books, and during the years I knew her took no public action. I am aware that M. Marconi was thunderstruck at her grasp of the problems of wireless telegraphy; that M. Santos Dumont, and later on the officers of the Royal Aeroplane Factory, were amazed at her knowledge of their particular subject. But to say so here does not carry us much farther.

All you can go by is the class of books she read habitually, and how she discussed them afterwards; above all, by her conversation, in which it was impossible not to feel the easy power of her brain, and the complete independence and *originality* of her points of view.

As for lapses . . . the spots on the sun are far more interesting symptoms of that

monstrous fever-patient's temperature, than statistics as to what amount of heat he emits per millionth part of a second.

I have no doubt that readers will be struck, too, by the contradictions in the Empress's personality as described by the present writer.

I cannot help it. They were there. And this, I think is the reason why she has been so imperfectly appreciated,—for the world resents being puzzled. On the other hand, the latter part of her life is one strong, clear line, that more than redeems the uncertainty of other lines—and this, I believe, is the impress she will be found to have left on the pages of history. Can anything transcend the dignity of that long, iron silence? Can the world ever forget that supreme spectacle of one who knew how to fall?

To those who have known her in all the matchless nobility of her spirit, in all the miracle of her undimmed mental power, this death is not like the passing of a human being. It is as if the Temple at Pæstum had been suddenly overthrown by an earthquake.

Probably she never realised the depths of reverence and affection, the passionate admiration she inspired. She had long since lost the habit of expecting or asking anything for herself, and, as I have said, hers was not an imaginative tender nature—not one of those in the house of whose spirit every hearth that blazed in youth holds a flame, even in extreme old age. She stood, and was capable of standing alone, and it was difficult to do anything for her, except, now and again, bring interest and stimulus into her intellectual life. I think she took delight in the devotion of those few she may be said to have been fond of, and among these Madame d'Attainville and Count Joseph Primoli, both of them relations, were prominent. I am certain, too, that she was glad in the knowledge that those whom she had befriended—whether old members of her group, like the present writer, or the very last batch of young officers who passed through her hospital—were not ungrateful, and, above all, counted on her as the one friend who would never fail.

Otherwise she had won for herself an independence of sympathy that, if in a certain sense rather inhuman, was counterbalanced by her most human, phenomenal, and tireless pre-occupation with the sorrows and the joys of others. In a word, she had outlived the power of receiving consolation, but had become herself the great Consoler.

Possibly that which was, and is, in the hearts of those that loved her may reach her yet, and be of some use to her in the place she has gone to. If one did not venture to believe this, the sorrow of her death would be almost unbearable.

VIGNETTES.

BY ELLA MACMAHON.

XII. THE CRUSADERS.

THE MALE CRUSADER was the first to make his appearance in our midst. He was English, of course, and had come from England in order to awaken us (the Irish) to our great heritage. The manner in which he opened his crusade was scarcely propitious. To begin with, he bought Timothy Feehan's deserted and tumble-down cabin at a fancy price. Timothy had some time before been put in possession by the Government of a brand-new cottage, built of mountain granite after a hideous architectural design, but trim, compact, and weather-proof to a degree never before dreamed of by its occupants. Hence it came about that Timothy should have in his possession a derelict mound of stone and rotten thatch within a hundred yards or so of his new dwelling, which, till the Crusader appeared, it had never entered into his wildest imagination to suppose that any person would even take a present of, far less buy from him. It followed, therefore, that when the Crusader offered to purchase it, Timothy began to be suspicious of him, or—for we are at all times suspicious of the stranger within our gates in Ireland—that his suspicion should be increased by the fact of any presumably sane person offering unasked a ridiculously high price for an obviously bad bargain. The Crusader did this—as later on he confided to me—in order to treat the vendor generously; and added that in his belief all that the Irish people needed was generous treatment on the part of England, and he was trying to lead the way. When I tried to explain this to Timothy, he exclaimed—

"Generous how are ye? 'Faith ye'd be a queer omadhaun if ye believed the like o' that. An' I'll tell ye this, 'tis up to no good he is, if it isn't that he's not all in it! Anny way, ye'd be moidered in yer ears listening to the talk he has out of him."

It was unfortunate for the Crusader that he happened to be the possessor of what is sometimes described in Ireland as a "tall English accent," a possession of which he was naturally unconscious. It was also, perhaps, a drawback that he should have come straight to Ireland after four years spent in the mental atmosphere of Balliol College, Oxford. Any person fortunate enough to be acquainted with Ireland and Balliol will easily apprehend the disadvantage under which he laboured in this respect. Still, he might possibly have escaped arousing

the worst suspicions had he not further chosen to array himself in a kilt. This garment (which no one in the village had ever seen before) he believed to be the traditional attire of the male inhabitant of Ireland in the days when our Ireland was peopled with those mixed tribes which certain ardent patriots persist in regarding as having formed a nation. The kilt was of thick frieze and the colour of saffron. It was not unbecoming when worn, as the Crusader wore it, with a certain grace, and with the addition on high days and full state of a saffron shawl draped over one shoulder in Highland fashion. In itself this peculiar garb, worn by an English gentleman who could not boast of an infinitesimal drop of Irish blood in his veins, might have been accepted as the academic robes of an English college, or even the national dress of some Anglo-Saxon tribe, even though feminine sensibility among us was scandalised by its brevity (the fashion of the short skirt not having yet penetrated to our village), and the sight of manly legs unclothed about the knee—but that the Crusader chose to attend the funeral of a local Patriot of many imprisonments, and therefore high esteem, thus garbed. The village to a man leaped to the conclusion that another insult to Ireland was thereby intended, no less than an unpardonable indignity to the dead.

A few pleas in extenuation were indeed put forth. I myself tried to explain the supposedly Hibernian origin of the saffron kilt by the fact that certain Irish gentlemen of high position and "popular" proclivities have been known to go so far as to wear it even in Piccadilly; but I met with little success. Piccadilly and its standards carry no weight among us, whereas local feeling carries a great deal. True, Timothy Feehan, whose palm was still tingling from the unaccustomed impact of a considerable sum of money, asserted—not for the first time—that "Sure the creature, God help him! wasn't all in it," and even hazarded the surmise that in a country "so quare an' English as England, may be 'twas the fashion to go to funerals in all the colours of the rainbow." But these well-meaning efforts were decisively discounted for what they were worth by his neighbours.

On the other hand, the Crusader remained blandly unconscious of all this; indeed—so much for our Irish powers of dissimulation or perfection of manners, which you will—he assured me not long after that he was "winning them"—"them" being the inhabitants of the village and various stray farmhouses within a radius of ten miles. To this end, moreover, and with that intimate knowledge of Irish character which strangers in Ireland so often believe themselves to possess in large measure, he was in the habit of attending Mass on Sundays at the Roman Catholic chapel,

which, in defiance of traditional custom on the part of its worshippers, he persisted in calling the parish church—thereby causing continual confusion in local converse. He did this regularly Sunday by Sunday, having been first careful to explain to Timothy Feehan and other friends of that sort that every form of denominational religion was equally meaningless to him, and that dogmatic belief of any kind was powerless to subjugate his reason or his heart. I do not suppose for a moment that Timothy had the faintest idea of what dogma or denomination meant, but even if he indulged in any conjectures as to their meaning, they would doubtless have led him to the conclusion at which, with or without conjecture, he had had no difficulty in arriving—namely, that the Crusader, whatever he might choose to say, was a Protestant. The sight of a Protestant—from England, too—bending the knee before the Most Sacred Mystery of his Faith, was far from pleasing to Timothy, or to a people whose Faith is at once the passion and pride of their souls and the fiercely contested possession of centuries. The very sincerity of the Crusader's intentions only served for his undoing. He burned to show "sympathy" with what he regarded as these deluded but downtrodden folk, ridden rough-shod, as he fervently declaimed, by a Government alien in religion, race, and outlook. How could he know that such sympathy coming from him stank in their nostrils as the very fumes of treachery!

"What call has the like o' him to be coming to the chapel at all?" was the comment with which his good intent was assailed; "would he put a foot in it if he wasn't up to no good? Let him go to his own church that there's ready for him."

As a matter of fact, the Crusader disliked the Church of Ireland service because it was too Protestant. I ventured to say this to Timothy.

"Too Protestant!" he repeated sceptically; "'faith, that's quare talk for any wan that's a Protestant theirselves."

And there is no doubt that this was the prevailing view. Even old Mrs Doherty, whose whole simple life was a personification of the charity which is kind, was severely pooh-poohed when with her gentle piety she tried to put the best construction upon it.

"Yees may be talkin', but who knows but may be the Lord and His Blessed Mother has put it in his heart to come to the Truth."

"'Arrah, go on out o' that with ye"—Timothy's robustly practical suspiciousness rose above his remembrance of that bargain for the moment,—"the Lord has ne'er a hand's-turn in it. Divil a bit. 'Tis going round he is looking for what he can see, and that's the whole of it all."

"Meself," interposed Mrs Timothy Feehan, "lived with Protestants in service for sixteen years, and very good people and nice people they

were; ye couldn't fault 'em; but if they'd have took to coming to Mass I'd have left them, for I'd know there was something in it that wasn't right. But the like of them real ould gentry 'd never do a thing like that, to be making a mock of us. They would not. An' what I like"—the speaker made a vehement and sweeping gesture—"is the people that live up to their religion and leave others to live up to theirs. *Them's* the good people and the nice people, and them goes on with no nonsense and no fantigues; an' didn't th' ould masther give the grand site for the new chapel? ay, 'faith, an' he the blackest Protestant in three counties: that's the right sort, I say. But I wouldn't think much of this fella with the bare knees of him. 'Twould give ye a turn to see them in the holy Church; an' mark my words, ye'll find him out yet."

"Augh, woman dear, whisht with yer chat; sure ye know no more o' the worrld than a spancelled goat." Timothy was by no means unimpressed by his wife's opinion, but he felt bound to dissent from it, as being hers; for in Ireland, however deep our devotion to Peter, we are whole-heartedly Pauline in our acceptance of that Apostle's pronouncements upon the feminist question in general, and with regard to wives in particular. "What would you know of the like o' him? Hasn't he the right to do what he fancies, no matter what he is! Bedad, his money's good, annyway. Didn't Clancy tell me he puts half-a-crown on the plate every time he sets foot inside the chapel door, and another as often as not for the poor, let alone a shillin' as well for the holy souls; and he give five shillin's for the dues; where would ye get the like o' that in this place? Sure, ould Billy Keane, that's the biggest publican between this and Dublin, wouldn't do betther nor *that*—no, nor half as good, maybe, if the truth was known, for he's a real naygur [Timothy meant miser, but that is our local phrase for it], and the same could be said for many a wan that's nearer to us, too."

The significance with which this was said reduced Mrs Timothy to silence, if not acquiescence, it being well known that her family were "that mane, sure they'd skin a flea for the bones and fat"; while, according to Timothy, he had been done out of ten pounds of the dowry agreed to by his prospective father-in-law after he had "*pre*ferred marriage to herself." His view may and no doubt was also influenced by the fact that the Crusader, having purchased his tumble-down cabin, had set about restoring and enlarging it in a manner that not only rendered it possible for a civilised being to live in, but gave a good deal of employment as well. Timothy, who owned a cart and a spavined mare, discovered a little gold-mine in drawing stones for the new building. He had therefore no

object in driving the source of such wealth to another neighbourhood.

In course of time there arose upon the ruin a fair-sized cottage, which, after further embellishment by a Dublin firm of decorators and furnishers, proved a comfortable if modest bachelor abode, and herein the Crusader dwelt. His retinue consisted of Mrs Timothy Feehan, who, with traditions of sixteen years' service with "the highest in the land," proved equal to providing three solid meals a day for his sustenance, together with a boy for the garden, who slept in, cleaned boots and knives — indifferently — performed other menial duties unnecessary to specify, and was ordered about by Mrs Timothy with a sultanic arrogance of which perhaps only those who also serve are capable towards their subordinates.

It was about this time when, his energies no longer absorbed by house-building, and being somewhat at a loose end, the Crusader fell in with the Irish language. It may be recalled that some years ago a band of enthusiasts, instigated thereto and headed by a German professor, had discovered a great literature somewhere in existence and written in the so-called Irish language. Fired by the German professor, who went about declaiming with all the weight of his Teutonic culture and authority (then very great amongst us) that this treasure of ancient Irish literature far surpassed the works of comparative barbarians, such as Homer for example; and that modern degenerates like Shakespeare and Milton were not worthy to be mentioned in the same breath with the authors of 'Cuhuelain' and 'Deirdre,' and the 'Dun Cow'—a band of worthy, intelligent, and even well-educated persons (mostly ladies) set themselves in all haste to learn the Irish language, in order to taste the sweetness of this fabulous treasure. Some among these amiable enthusiasts were indeed not a little inflamed by the statement, reiterated with much force by their Teutonic guide, that the base and soulless English Government had —for some reason difficult to discover—crushed, suppressed, and hid for centuries—somewhere—the unsurpassable and glorious literature of ancient Ireland. Herein was the German professor justified of his guile, for any one who has even the slightest acquaintance of Ireland will readily understand what a fillip such a charge would give to a supposedly national study, even though it was unsupported by any evidence other than the word of a German. From various causes, however,—one of which was the difficulty which its votaries found in mastering it, and another the interruption and cessation (for reasons hardly necessary to recapitulate) of the professor's visits to Ireland,—the movement had somewhat waned before the day when the Crusader leaped into the

Celtic Twilight, or, to be plain, returned from Dublin with a trunk-load, carted from the station by Timothy's spavined mare, of grammars, dictionaries, and various other (modern) works wherewith to begin his acquisition of the Irish. It may be placed to the credit of the Irish language that its pursuit kept him quiet for several months. But by the time he was able to read slowly some of the easier text, the crusading spirit awoke in him again with a violence doubtless due to its recent suppression. Its first expression was to accost every one in Irish and to refuse to utter a word of English. He began on the nearest object, otherwise "the boy." The boy, transfixed, reported that "the masther was talkin' French and the divil a worrd ye could understand," while being Irish and at the sensitive age of fifteen, he was very huffy at being addressed in a tongue which he could neither speak nor understand, and thereby of course made to look ridiculous. The Crusader next treated Mrs Timothy Feehan to his new accomplishment. She returned home and expressed fears for his sanity.

"Believe you me," she remarked impressively to her lord, "I wouldn't care a ha'porth if it was only to the boy he'd be talkin' like that; but when he went and let out a sthream of gibberish at meself, I give ye me worrd the heart lep' out o' me with the dread; an' d'ye know, I'd be sorry if it was to happen to him, for, God help him! he has no wit no more than a new-born child, but he's the heart's blood of a gentleman in the latther end."

Ours is not, and has not been for more than a century, an Irish-speaking district; it is one in which the "League," not the Gaelic League, reigned supreme, and the arbiters of the policy of the Land League had not espoused the language question with any special ardour. That, however, was a matter of which either the Crusader was ignorant or incapable of grasping. Moreover, it was ever his way to run ahead of the Irish themselves in patriotic fervency. The language, he declared, must live again amongst us. Nothing could alter his fixed opinion on that point. That the language would be of no practical use in a world where it had ceased to exist as a living speech influenced him not an iota; he was equally impervious to the unconcealed indifference with which his crusade was met. On the contrary, so pertinacious was his spirit and so buoyant his hopes, that he insisted upon his correspondents addressing his letters in Gaelic characters, and spelling his name in accordance with a Gaelic counterpart of it, which he had himself invented; which led to no result more important than unpleasantness at the local post-office, the latter naturally resenting an innovation which entailed confusion and consequent irritation. Indeed, his unbalanced zeal

in this evoked a fresh spurt of suspicion in the breast of the villa[illegible], especially when, with his characteristic perspicacity, and stung by the opposition which at last even he could hardly fail to see, he threw out hints to Timothy of his intention to approach the Government inspector of schools on the question of compulsory Irish. That roused even Timothy Feehan.

"Let him go on now," he said warningly, "and be puttin' Governmint on us an' it'll be the worse for him. The Lord knows we've no objection to him as long as he's quiet and easy, but to be talkin' of drawin' down trouble on us that way is no work for a gentleman to be doin' on poor people."

"We want no Irish put on us," was actually yelled at him by the children as they came out of school; "go on out o' that, you and yer ould Irish, and leave us alone"; while the boy refused to hear if spoken to in the ancient tongue of his country, and Mrs Timothy Feehan, getting no sympathy from her husband, confided her apprehensions to old Mrs Doherty, "that she was in dread maybe the fella's would 'do' something on him if he'd be going on talkin' like that much longer."

This was the pass to which the matter had come when there entered into our circle THE FEMALE CRUSADER.

The female Crusader was English also. She, too, arrived hot-foot from England; but unlike the male Crusader, her object in seeking Ireland was not that of Ireland's development, but her own. She was in fact one of those young women, of whom there are many in these days, who cannot get on with their mothers. Unlike their less fortunate predecessors, these young women no sooner discover that lamentable condition than they make haste to leave their mothers, and find no difficulty in doing so. There are now, thanks to the expansion of woman's opportunities, so obligingly granted to her by man, many ways by which young women so desiring can escape from their mothers and achieve "careers." Twenty years or more ago the female Crusader would have developed herself or "lived her own life" in the only way open to persons like her—namely, between the four walls of some well-known hospital; to-day the avenues are vastly multiplied. One such avenue opened just outside our village. A lady, left with a place about three sizes too big for her income, conceived the happy thought of setting up a college of gardening for gentlewomen. To this college the Crusader came. Her choice of Ireland for the "avenue" was partly her own, but—though they were wise enough to conceal it from her—in greater measure by her parents, who, advised by Irish friends, came to the conclusion, and rightly, that in certain respects she would be safer there than in other countries, and in this, if in nothing else, succeeded in carrying their point.

The female Crusader was a tall girl of three-and-twenty, with a pale complexion, good grey eyes, and an abundance of fine dark hair, which was glossy and well cared for, but seldom tidy. She had a figure more active than graceful, and large feet. She was violently self-opinionated, had been at school at Cheltenham and Dresden, where she was stuffed with knowledge of which she had little real apprehension, and believed herself to be educated because she denied the existence of God, and could read Nietzsche in the original. She arrived in our midst with a good deal of very up-to-date and expensive luggage, a circumstance which was in her favour, for we expect visitors from England to be rich, and rather resent it if they are not. It is part of our tradition that they ought to be so, and we do not part with our traditions lightly. Like her luggage, her clothes were expensive and up to date (in one particular too much so, since she had to be gently but firmly restrained from wearing the beautiful cord breeches which formed part of the gardening kit). The female Crusader was indeed as proud of her breeches as the male Crusader of his kilt; but it was made clear to her, not without great difficulty, that an Irish community might at a pinch swallow the kilt, when the breeches would be totally beyond its assimilation. As it was, she did not quite satisfy our requirements as to real Quality. In spite of her expensive clothes, she had not the art of looking well-dressed, and Nature had not bestowed upon her that build and air which in Ireland we regard as aristocratic. Indeed, Timothy Feehan has been heard to make a remark about "ladies be the way who were beef to the heels like the Mullingar heifers."

This, however, was after she had addressed him with that mingled jocosity and gush which is so often, alas! the first, and last, mistake the visitor can make in converse with the Irish peasant.

"I love your Paddyland," she cried to him archly.

Timothy gazed at her with an expression so stupid and uncomprehending that, had it truthfully indicated his mental capacity, would have landed him in a public institution.

"What's that?" he inquired slowly.

She laughed, believing that she had called forth a gem of native humour.

"You dear quaint person," she returned with another gush of archness, "how I long to give you all your freedom straight away."

Timothy's face hardened into a sort of inscrutable dulness. He said—

"Wh-hich?" in a slow hissing drawl. Even the female Crusader could scarcely read humour into that word. She gazed at him, however, with the amiable curiosity and interest of the visitor at the Zoo, and, undaunted by the lack of response, put her head on one side and tried again.

"You know," she said

blandly, "that we English think far more kindly of you Irish than you do about us."

"Bedad, miss, I wouldn't wondther."

Timothy went home subsequently and regaled his wife with a full-blooded mimicry of the interview, which threw that good lady into such paroxysms of mirth that at last she threw her apron over her head and screamed in muffled jerks—

"Oh man, dear, stop or I'll be sick. Ye have the life let out of me heart with the way yer makin' me laff!"

Nor, it must be confessed, was the female Crusader more happy in other circles. Politely bidden to the Rectory, where, finding the rector's wife surrounded by the cream of the parishioners, she seized the first opportunity to observe to her estimable hostess—

"*You*, I suppose, believe in God. *I* don't."

This shattering remark flung into the midst of a small clerical drawing-room slightly missed its mark.

"Yes, indeed. Let me give you some more tea," was no doubt not the rejoinder which its author expected. But, again, nothing daunted, she remarked, with the second cup of tea—

"Irish Protestantism, of all forms of Protestantism, has no *raison d'être*."

"No, of course not. We hear you sing beautifully, and mean to ask you to give us a little help in church. Country choirs *are*——"

For the second time the female Crusader had to give it up.

A neighbourhood like ours could not have contained the male and female Crusaders for very long without their meeting each other. And having become acquainted they were, in the nature of things, foredoomed to one another.

Mrs Timothy Feehan was the first to see how rapidly the male Crusader was (in her opinion) advancing towards his undoing. "An' the instant minit I set eyes upon that wan"—even thus did Mrs Timothy ever speak of the female Crusader—"in this house, but, glory be to God! sez I to meself, he's goin' to meet his fate."

To be quite accurate, I think the speaker meant that the Crusader's "fate" was coming to meet him much oftener than, in her eyes, was desirable. The fact was that the Crusader had taken upon himself, amongst other activities in the cause of Ireland, to instruct his new acquaintance in the Irish language. She had entered upon her studies with even greater zeal than that with which she championed the restoration of complete amity with the Germans. On that point her opinions, always loudly expressed, had met with a reception among all members of our community which had considerably astonished her, believing as she did that Ireland was wholly pro-German. Timothy Feehan condensed our views of her opinions into two words—

"ugly talk,"—a phrase which hid behind it in his belief a suspicion that by talking to them in such a way she meant to get them into trouble; while among higher circles the rumour spread that she had been in love with a German officer before the war. The Irish language, however, headed her off Germany. If there had ever been a German officer, it was probable that he was dead, and it was quite certain that alive or dead he was worlds away from her. The Crusader, on the other hand, was pleasantly alive and close beside her; moreover, her fervid imagination pictured her to herself as the Saviour of Ireland, a new Joan of Arc, but one whose weapon—so she said—was the pen, not the sword. I said—

"The pen is mightier than the sword."

She agreed with me, with a gravity which only the utterly humourless can achieve.

With this great object before her, she made a point of "getting to know the peasantry." Her idea of doing so was to accost them on every occasion possible. She took long walks in order to "come across them." This surprised the neighbourhood very much. Ours is an old-fashioned county; in its experience Quality never walked the roads. They rode or drove in carriages or "traps," or outside cars, or motor-cars, or even travelled on bicycles, but never on foot.

"To be streeling the country roads, and she be the way of a lady, was a quare notion and no mistake," as Mrs Timothy Feehan remarked acidly; and before very long most of us were seriously exercised in our minds as to whether our visitor was "right" or not!

"An' if ye ask me," observed Mrs Timothy, "I'd say she was a bould wan."

This, I think, arose from the fact that the female Crusader, who, of course, did not go to church, was often seen on Sunday morning by the congregation returning from "last Mass" seated on the stile leading into the Protestant church, smoking a cigarette, reading a newspaper, and "danglin' her legs in top-boots" (waders to be accurate), in a flagrant disregard of the day and the place, abhorrent to the eyes of a country where Catholic and Protestant alike cherish a rigid respect for the Sabbath.

Further, it became clear before very long that Mrs Timothy's apprehensions with regard to the Crusader were well founded. So rapid was the progress in the alphabet of love, if not in that of Irish, that we were not in the least surprised, although distinctly shocked, when the Crusader announced his impending marriage at the nearest Registry Office.

The house of Feehan was indeed rent with the objurgations and lamentations of its mistress.

"An' it's what *I* say is this," she remarked, "that no wan ever heard of a minit's luck or

grace to anny one that'd go for to get married in an ould Registhery Office. Surely the like o' that isn't marriage at all. Didn't *I* tell ye that was a bowld one. An' ye'll see when she comes home *we* may whistle down the wind and that'll be the end of us."

The Crusader, however, at the height of the infatuated stage, paid no heed to public opinion, albeit Irish and loyal, but at the behest of his betrothed hied him to the adjacent town of Dunsealy to procure a licence of whatever form of authorisation might be necessary for marriage before a Registrar.

"She has him bewitched," said Mrs Feehan to her lord, despairingly, "and it's God's truth the misfortunate crature doesn't know whether he's on his head or his heels this day."

Be that as it may, the Crusader was sufficiently sensible to take the necessary steps to arrange matters at the Registry Office. Nor did he find much difficulty in doing so; on the contrary, it seemed to be an expeditious and cheap way of getting married. All went well until it came to the point where the Crusader's signature was required to certain formal documents. The Crusader boldly signed his name in Gaelic characters, and spelt it in accordance with the Irish form into which he had Hibernicised it.

The official in charge protested quickly, but joocosely, as befitted the circumstances, against this.

"That won't do at all, at all," he remarked; "there's no Irish recognised be the Law, ye know; oh, ye can't take risks here," he added with a genial wink.

The Crusader became portentously solemn.

"My good man," he replied loftily, "I sign my name in any way I choose."

"Ye'll not do it here, that's certain," returned the other shortly, "and I'm neither yer good man nor yer bad man."

His wounded official dignity lent a certain stuffiness to his pronunciation.

"Ye must sign as I tell ye, yer full name — surname and Christian — in English, legibly."

"Never," exclaimed the Crusader; "English in Ireland is the language of slavery."

"Oh, as to that," interrupted the Registrar, "I've no time to be listening to nonsense of that sort. Go and talk to the corner boys at Hegarty's if ye want to talk like that, and maybe they'll give ye a drink for yer pains."

The Crusader drew himself up.

"You are trying to intimidate me," he said haughtily.

"I am, am I!" The Registrar banged his fist on the table. "Well, maybe the law'll intimidate ye yet. Sign or don't sign, whatever ye like, it's no affair of mine, but ye'll do it the way I tell ye, or ye'll go out of this, and stop wasting my time."

"I shall take Counsel's opinion as to this," rejoined the Crusader.

"Take as many opinions as ye like, me dear sir," retorted the other genially, "ye'll get them all for a guinea apiece."

"This is tyranny," cried the Crusader, losing his temper hotly.

"It's the law of the land," returned the Registrar grimly.

"Never."

"If ye *want* to be married, do as I tell ye," continued the Registrar with an air of laboured patience; "an' if ye *don't* want to be married ye needn't come here. An' if it's thinking of wronging the gerrl ye are, let me tell ye ye've come to the wrong box. Go back and do it in England, if that's what yer after. They're better at those sort of depredations over there than we are here. Now that's the last word I have to say to ye."

Obdurate to the end, the Crusader finally departed, breathing out threatenings and (legal) slaughterings against the Registrar and his office.

On this wise, therefore, was the marriage delayed, for the female Crusader declared that no power on earth would compel *her* to sign her name in the English language.

Mrs Timothy Feehan openly gave thanks in that, as she believed, the Lord Almighty Himself, and ne'er a one less, had intervened to save the Crusader from his fate.

"An' ye may say what ye like, but sure 'twould melt the heart of a stone wall to see the like o' him going to be desthroyed by that one. 'Twas she set him on to go to the Registhery instead of the church. Isn't it the scandal of the world to see a woman disbelieving in her Maker! Glory be to God! 'tis enough to bring a judgment on the place to have her in it at all, so it is. And wasn't he as happy as the day's long before she came into it, and let her go now and get a haythen in England for a husband and marry him any way she likes. 'Tis good enough for her."

The Crusader has persisted in taking counsel's opinion. Meantime Timothy Feehan, for no reason apparent to the dispassionate observer, has become a Sinn Feiner. Mrs Timothy eloquently deplores this step. But she goes further, for she appears to be obsessed with secret fears, and from time to time throws out hints of potential dangers of which she "does be in dread"—perils unseen but lurking in our midst, ready to spring upon us at any moment.

The Crusader, though harassed by his matrimonial complexities, has come out on Timothy's side and persists in arguing lengthily with Mrs Timothy as to the absurdity of her terrors. She, however, sticks to it that they (the Sinn Feiners) are "terrible wicked and terrible set agin the English." Indeed she gives it as her private and unbiassed belief, based upon sources of information so secret that if she were to divulge their whereabouts "the heart'd be wrung out of her body, and she'd be buried at the cross-

roads with a stake through her breast; that our neighbourhood is no place for any stranger, an' that them that doesn't belong to it had better leave it *while they can.*"

It may or may not have been by accident that these remarks and others like them reached the ears of the female Crusader's parents, who about the time of Timothy Feehan's change of politics paid a visit to their daughter, and, for the first time in their lives, to Ireland. Revelations of this description, though probably quite in accord with their private conception of Ireland, are, to say the least of it, disquieting to ears attuned to the safe and simple happenings of Wimbledon Common. So much so that, greatly against her will, the female Crusader has been conveyed *pro tem.* (*she* says) by her father to the peaceful heights of Putney Hill, bribed by her mother into acquiescence by the promise of a trousseau far exceeding feminine hope or thought.

Left behind in the danger zone, the Crusader is still working steadily through the members of the Irish Bar. There are a great many of them, and none averse from a fee. So far their opinions are six of one and half a dozen of the other.

A small Sinn Fein flag droops neglectedly from a tree in front of Timothy Feehan's Government-endowed dwelling, while a large and imposing one floats defiantly from a pole over the Crusader's hall door. Mrs Timothy Feehan is burning a candle once a month regularly to Saint Anthony.

A CANADIAN RIVER.

BY THE MARQUESS OF LANSDOWNE, K.G.

I FIRST heard of the Grand Cascapedia when, many long years ago, I was fishing on the river Tay in company with my old friend Edward Russell, afterwards Lord de Clifford, and Mr William Oakley, the well-known Master of the Atherstone Hounds. We were, I am sorry to say, "harling," a form of fishing now generally discarded on that splendid river. One morning whilst we were being rowed to and fro across the pool, Edward Russell pulled out of his pocket a letter from the Hon. Charles Ellis, who may, I suppose, be regarded as the pioneer of the Cascapedia, giving an account of the sport which he had been having. I have since seen the full figures of which these were only a portion, but even these were tremendous and took my breath away. These were days when Ellis, to his own rod, accounted for 15, 16, or 17 fish. I was told long afterwards by his principal boatman that those were days in which "the canoes ran blood." Ellis's description made a great impression on my mind, but the whole affair seemed very far off, and my fishing horizon at the time did not extend beyond our own Tay, my first and last love in the fishing line. An Eastern proverb has it that "the crow of one's own country is better than the Phœnix of a foreign land," and I have probably had more satisfaction in my time out of a red fish killed where Tay and Isla join their streams, than even out of the silvery monsters of the Canadian river.

But events subsequently brought me much closer to the Cascapedia. In 1883 I was offered, and accepted, the Governor-Generalship of Canada. During the weeks which preceded my departure, I received a number of invaluable letters from my predecessor, Lord Lorne, who was good enough to give me many useful hints about men and things in the Dominion. The picture which he drew was a most attractive one, and in the foreground a prominent place was occupied by the glorious river which had been placed at the disposal of his Royal Consort, H.R.H. Princess Louise—a river which was, Lord Lorne evidently thought, likely to remain in the hands of the new Governor-General. But just as we were leaving England our high hopes were rudely dashed. In the last letter which Lord Lorne wrote to me he imparted the sad intelligence that the Grand Cascapedia was to be leased by the Quebec Government to a syndicate, and that he was therefore interesting himself in securing for me another river—probably one of those

which flow into the Baie des Chaleurs towards the eastern end of the Gaspé Peninsula.

Our disappointment was great. I found, however, on my arrival in Canada, that the transaction with the syndicate had not been consummated, and I set to work at once to retrieve the situation. I was greatly assisted by Sir Hector Langevin, a prominent Quebecker and an influential member of Sir John Macdonald's ministry. Through Sir Hector I put forward the suggestion that if the river, which had been a free gift to my predecessor, was to be let, I should like to be considered as a possible tenant for it. The negotiations proceeded favourably, and as the result I obtained a lease of the river, all but the lower and least interesting pools, at a very moderate rent.

A few words as to the geography of the country through which the grand Cascapedia flows. It enters the Baie des Chaleurs about half-way between the head and the mouth of the bay, and is called the "Grand" Cascapedia, to distinguish it from a smaller and much inferior river—the "little" Cascapedia—which immediately adjoins it. As it nears the sea at New Richmond it traverses a sparsely inhabited region occupied by farmers who have settled on the alluvial land. Many of these have succeeded in acquiring, with their farms, the right to erect stake nets. There seemed to be any number of them, and one wondered how any fish could run the gauntlet; but the nets were fortunately very ramshackle affairs, and judging from the number of net-marked fish claimed by the rod in the upper waters, many of them must have smashed their way successfully through the obstructions. These nets have, I believe, been got rid of, and the rod-fishing must benefit greatly thereby.

Lord Lorne used to make his headquarters at a farm known as "Woodmans," in close proximity to some good fishing water, notably a pool known as "the Princess's," so called after the royal lady as a compliment, to whom the Quebec Government had ceded the fishing rights to her husband.

Above this point the river runs through densely wooded and almost untrodden solitudes. About forty miles from the mouth it divides into two branches known as the "Indian" and "Salmon" branches. These lose themselves in the low mountains marked on the map as the St Anne's Range, and forming the watershed between the Baie des Chaleurs and the St Lawrence.

Here and there the stream finds itself suddenly checked: sometimes a huge shingle bed deposited by the spring floods, sometimes a rocky reef on which the current can make no impression, sometimes a so-called "timber jam"—the name which graphically describes an accumulation of drift-wood and rubbish of

all kinds — heads back the stream and compels it to flow like a mill race through a comparatively narrow exit. It is these contractions which have created the pools—deep troughs in which the fish love to rest on their upward journey to the spawning beds.

The pools, or groups of pools, are usually wide apart. Their anatomy varies greatly, but, as a rule, there is at the head of each of them a rapid, flowing like a small cascade down a precipitous descent. In some cases the water of this rapid may be comparatively smooth, in others it is broken by jagged reefs of rock or boulders of terrifying aspect. The dexterity with which the men pole their craft up-stream through these obstacles, fighting their way inch by inch, or again guide the canoes on the not less dangerous journey down-stream, is past all belief: they are artists, and to their skill, much more than to the fisherman's, are due the big catches which have made the Cascapedia famous.

The river banks are clothed by a dense forest of spruce and pine, with here and there a sprinkling of birch (yellow and white) and maple, while near the water's edge there is a considerable growth of poplar, mostly the balsam poplar, appropriately so called on account of the fragrance of its leaves when the buds first expand. On a warm evening the air is heavy with the scent of these trees. So dense is the growth that there are very few spots at which it is possible to take a cast off the shore; but at one or two points, generally where a shingle bed adjoins the pool, it is possible for the fisherman to leave his boat and fish the stream in his own way standing on *terra firma*. There were two or three places where I used to do this with much success, and greatly to my own satisfaction, but as a rule the *modus operandi* was as follows. The canoe was poled to the head of the stream, a stone anchor attached to a rope of stout manilla hemp was let go, and the rope was paid out gradually, foot by foot, after each cast. When the boat came to the end of its tether the anchor was hauled in and let go again a few yards lower down. In this way the holding parts of the pool could be systematically and thoroughly searched. Much judgment had to be exercised in deciding what water to fish and what to leave alone. The bed of the river was constantly changing. The spring floods undermined the banks, which collapsed, carrying with them the trees which stood nearest to the water's edge, and so old pools were silted up and new pools excavated. A pool might be excellent one season and useless the next. It used to be my delight and that of my two men, who were as keen as I was, to prospect for new fishing ground, and we were triumphant when we succeeded, as we often did, in

extracting a fish from some hitherto untried and uncharted pool.

My observations up to this point have been mainly descriptive and general. It may be convenient that I should pass to narrative and give some account of our own personal experiences.

In the early months of 1884, when the Ottawa Session was drawing towards its close, when the "robins" were beginning to arrive, and the little blue hepaticas to peep out from under the thawing snow, our thoughts began to turn to fishing. The campaign required careful organisation. We had decided that we would not be content with a camp at "Woodmans," but that we must have a home of our own in the wilderness higher up the river and remote from the haunts of men. H. A., best of A.D.C.'s and most persevering of fishermen, was deputed to spy the land. With him we sent Reid, head carpenter at Government House, a delightful Scotchman, with infinite skill in all matters concerning his trade, and possessing all the shrewdness and resourcefulness of his race. The reports received by letter from our mission were encouraging, and H. A. was given *carte blanche* to select a site on which Reid was to construct the new house. There were only a few weeks to spare, but Reid undertook to have some kind of shelter ready for us in time for the opening of the season. The house was to be of the simplest kind, built entirely of wood, of which an abundant supply could be obtained locally, and we were unhampered by by-laws as to the design of the structure.

The long-awaited day came at last, and on the 12th of June I started with H. A. from Quebec, travelling by the Inter-Colonial Railway to Dalhousie, and passing on our way the Metapedia, where George Stephen (now Lord Mount Stephen) had his fishing quarters, and the famous Restigouche, much frequented by wealthy Americans. At Dalhousie we took steamer as far as New Richmond, where we landed; then came a rough drive, which grew rougher and rougher, through a woodland country with here and there the homestead of a small farm. The ground seemed literally covered with wild flowers, and the scenery throughout was bright and attractive. Our first inspection showed how well H. A. and Reid had acquitted themselves of their task. They had chosen a kind of terrace, a good many feet above the level of the river, with a naturally dry soil. The house stood on a bend, so that our view enfiladed the stream, of which we had pleasant glimpses upwards and downwards through the intervening trees. On another terrace, a little way above that on which our house stood, the staff used to pitch their camp, and the trim, bright-coloured tents contrasted delightfully with the dark green of the adjoining forest. Just above our camp were two famous pools, "the

Rock" and "the Ledge," of which we took heavy toll in the years which followed. Exactly opposite New Derreen —this was the name which we gave to our little residence, in honour of another dearly beloved Derreen on the west coast of Ireland — a small stream, little more than a big brook (the Escuminac), added its waters to those of the main river. The Escuminac was much frequented by large sea-trout, but I do not think the salmon ever used it. Below the meeting of the waters was a deep pool, a good deal disturbed by our canoes, but scarcely ever without a fish. Between the house and the pool lay a shingly beach, at the edge of which the boatmen's camp had been established, as well as an ice-house for storing salmon.

New Derreen was constructed with marvellous rapidity. It was a low one-storied building, entirely of wood, with a shingle roof. It contained a mess-room, a sitting-room, two or three small bedrooms, little more than cubicles, with a kitchen and servants' quarters at the back. On two sides fronting the river it was provided with a broad verandah, in which we used to spend a great deal of our time.

When we first arrived we depended for our water-supply on water brought up in buckets from the river, but we were able to improve upon this by capturing a small rill on the hillside, a hundred yards or so from the house, and bringing it down in a kind of rough wooden aqueduct carried from tree to tree. This provided us with an unfailing supply of perfectly pure and ice-cold water.

A word on the scenery of the adjoining country. It was densely wooded—there were trees everywhere—but it must be confessed that there was a complete absence of anything which could be described as fine timber. The reason is not far to seek. The more accessible of these so-called "timber limits" are leased to the great mill-owners, and have for many years past been worked over by the lumberers. Every winter lumbering parties push their way farther and farther into the mountains, singling out and felling the sound sticks; thus it happens that all the more robust and stately trees fall victims to the axe and are converted into "saw logs." If a tree is sound and clean, down it comes, with the result that only the unsound and immature trees survive.

The marketable trees are thrown while the snow is on the ground, and the stems are rolled down the hillside to the nearest stream. When the snow melts and the spring floods come, they are carried automatically down the rivers until they reach the depots, where they are collected behind a floating boom, like sheep in a pen, and remain until such time as they can be dragged on an endless chain to the sawmill, where they are rapidly converted into "deals."

But while the bulk of the logs are thus hurried rapidly to their destination, many stick fast on the sandbanks or in the eddies, where they sail round and round hopelessly, and eventually take anchor. Quite a number of logs are thus intercepted. These are too valuable to be neglected, and accordingly, after the first raging floods have spent their strength, but before the water has touched its low summer level, parties of "drivers" are sent up the rivers to extricate these lost sheep and expedite their journey to the mills. The driving party is conveyed in several canoes, with a crew of two or three men to each. These men, often half-breed Indians, are equally at home on shore or in the water, and are unrivalled in the dexterous use of pole, paddle, or axe.

The driving gangs work their way down from the head waters in the heart of the mountains, and make it their business to search every nook and corner for lost logs. Each of these is, when found, dislodged from its resting-place and carefully shepherded until it is once again fairly launched upon the current. The work is extremely rough and difficult, and is performed with wondrous skill; but to the salmon fisherman this log-driving campaign, coming as it does when the salmon fishing is at its best, is an unmitigated nuisance. The "drivers" are, not without reason, suspected of taking toll of the pools as they pass by them. They would be more than human if they did not; nor are they likely to be particular as to their methods, and there is no poacher's art of which they are not past-masters. A light net can easily be stowed away in the canoe, and when the fish are huddled together in the upper pools torch and spear can be used with deadly effect.

I can well remember my first introduction to a timber drive. I was fishing the famous Limestone Pool—one of the best in the lower section of the river—the water was in excellent order, and fish were showing in numbers. I had killed one large salmon, and was fast in another, which was putting up a good fight. I suddenly became aware of something which looked like a huge crocodile sailing down the pool in my direction, and in a few moments I found the floating stem of a large spruce between me and my fish. I dipped the point of my rod and allowed the line to sink as far as it would go, but I soon felt it rasping along the rough surface of the log and a break seemed inevitable. More by chance than skill, the line was successfully manipulated until the great tree-trunk had passed by us, and I was able to resume offensive tactics. The fish was landed, and I was congratulating myself on my good fortune, and intending to recommence operations, when I caught sight in the offing of a second log, followed by a third and yet others in an apparently

endless procession. I had never encountered a timber drive before, and now realised too fully what it meant. For the rest of that morning I was completely defeated.

After this digression I ought perhaps to explain that our river was divided into three sections—the Home Beat, of which I have already said something; the Middle Camp, about seven miles farther up the river, where there was a substantially built log-hut used by the lumberers in the winter and by fishermen in the summer season; and the Upper or Lazybogan section, also equipped with a log-hut, which must have been some twenty miles farther. The Middle Camp section contained some magnificent pools, which always yielded fine sport early in the season. After that they became less productive—I cannot help thinking, owing to the interest taken in them by the timber-drivers. The Upper section was wonderful; there were good holding pools above and below the camp; but in order to reach this you had not only to face a long journey up-stream, but to surmount the Indian Rapid, much the most formidable obstacle of the kind on the whole river, owing to its length and the extreme roughness of the water. The ascent of this rapid involved a most arduous, not to say dangerous, piece of poling. I used generally to leave the canoe and follow the trail on the river bank until the top of the rapid was reached. The men were only too glad to be relieved of the necessity of carrying an extra ten stone up the rapid. The latter consideration did not apply to the downward journey, and I more than once remained in the canoe for this, greatly enjoying the excitement of a descent quite as trying to the nerves as any toboggan slide with which I was ever concerned. There was a good salmon pool just above the rapid, and there was always the chance that a fish hooked in this pool would take the bit between his teeth and insist upon going down; I do not think, however, that any of our party ever had this stirring experience. I remember that on one occasion, as we were dropping carefully down the rapid, each man using the whole of his strength to steady the canoe, we caught sight of a fine new pole which had got fixed between two rocks and been left there by some previous travellers. The temptation was irresistible; our course was checked for a moment, and the coveted weapon snatched as we shot past it, and carried off in triumph.

We used to take it in turns to visit these upper waters, sending up a separate canoe to carry our blankets and stores. This commissariat canoe had for its passenger our emergency cook, George Bacon, a caretaker at the Quebec Citadel, whom we used to borrow every year for this purpose. George was a most resourceful person,

quite imperturbable and impervious to bad weather. Under the shelter of an extemporised screen, roofed with great slabs of bark, he was able with a fire of wood embers and a Dutch oven to produce out of the scantiest materials savoury messes with a *cachet* all their own. A plump sea-trout broiled on the ashes with a piece of fat pork inside it was one of his and our favourite dishes. "Victor," our cheery little French *chef*, remained in charge of culinary arrangements at New Derreen.

The journey from New Derreen to Lazybogan was a severe grind for the men, and indeed seemed long enough even for the passenger, as he sat without much elbow-room on the floor of the canoe. But for me these lovely reaches, with their infinite variety of woodland and river scenery, had an inexpressible charm.

We generally broke the journey half-way at a well-known landing, where, by a smooth sandy beach under the shade of an overhanging tree, an old shack afforded a certain amount of ready-made shelter. Here we camped out for the night. Our sleeping accommodation on these occasions was of the simplest: our blankets were laid on the top of a layer of freshly gathered spruce twigs, carefully laid so as to afford a smooth surface, supple and sweet-scented. On such a couch we slept, as one sleeps in the woods, and dreamt of forty-pounders.

One word as to our mode of fishing. Only the fly was permitted—prawn, minnow, and other baits being absolutely barred. During the early days of the season the fish would take almost any fly, and a good large one was preferable; later, as the river shrunk, they became more fastidious, and we had to wait until the evening and use what we should in Ireland describe as sea-trout flies. All the old standard patterns answered well. One could never go wrong with "Jock Scott," "Thunder and Lightning," or "Silver Doctor"; but I found some of the sober old Tay Turkey Wings quite as effectual as their more gaudy rivals.

We generally had three or four canoes out. Two men were told off to each, and William Dimmock, "*gardien*" of the river—an excellent fellow, and most skilful and trustworthy in a boat—was in supreme command of the whole flotilla. Of the prowess of these men as navigators I have already spoken. Their skill in the use of the gaff was almost inconceivable; but I am bound to say that the gaff which they used was a most barbarous weapon. It was a pole almost as long as a punt pole, armed with a huge curved iron head shaped something like a shepherd's crook. With these gaffs they would, if allowed, take the most extraordinary liberties; and I have over and over again seen them snatch an only half-played fish in the middle of the roughest water

long before he was really ready for the cleek. Their dexterity at this game more than once suggested to my mind that they had graduated in a fish-spearing school. I am glad to say that after a time I persuaded my own men to use a more civilised weapon, and to possess their souls in patience until I gave them a proper chance of securing the fish. It must be remembered that, owing to the dense growth which clothed the river banks, our fish had in nine cases out of ten to be lifted out of the water and into the boat instead of dragged ashore.

The men were as skilful in the use of the axe as in that of pole and paddle. New Derreen was surrounded by a dense growth of forest, and we used to spend a good deal of our spare time in clearing away the jungle. In those days I was very fond of cutting down trees, and though I never emulated Mr Gladstone's skill, I was fairly handy with the axe, and rather fancied myself in the *rôle* of a woodman. But these men fairly knocked the conceit out of me. I used sometimes to "take on" a tree in company with one of them, and I always chose the easy side of the tree, if there was one, for myself; but I was hopelessly left behind, and invariably found my partner well through his share of the work while I was still only half-way through mine. They were, it is true, extravagant of the timber, and used to make a huge gash which would have horrified a Scotch or English forester.

The picture would be incomplete without some account of the natural history of the river. In addition to salmon, it held any quantity of sea-trout. These ran later than the salmon, but by the month of July the river was full of them. They frequented as a rule the thinner water, but they were generally to be found in the salmon pools also. Here they were a great nuisance. They stuck at nothing in the way of a fly. They had tremendous teeth, and after playing one or two of them your fly was ruined. Moreover, the larger fish played very strong, and in spite of attempts to give them short shrift, splashed about all over the place and effectually disturbed the pool. We caught them up to 5 lb. weight, and a friend of mine who was on Lord Derby's staff has the outline of a seven-pounder which he captured. I have a photograph of a basket of ten caught by Lord Alexander Russell, and weighing 40 lb. When there was nothing better to do, we used frequently to go out with light rods and small flies and fill our baskets with these fish. I remember one occasion on which one of my sons and I found that a school of them had run up into a "bogan" (a back-water or creek), in the absolutely still and pellucid water of which we could see them quite plainly as they cruised around. We drove them out unceremoniously into an adjoining run where C. and I

caught sixty of them, weighing exactly 30 lb., in two or three hours.

Of wild animals there were not many. We rarely saw deer, although their tracks were now and then to be found. Now and again we encountered a bear, particularly on the higher and less frequented reaches. Once when dropping quietly down-stream I suddenly encountered one swimming across the river. My boatmen immediately started in hot pursuit, but the bear won by a short head, gained the shore, and shambled up the mountain-side before we could overtake him. Upon the whole it was perhaps fortunate that we failed. An entry in H. A.'s journal, "His Excellency rose a bear," probably refers to this incident. We often caught sight of a mink sneaking quietly along the bank. There were occasional musk-rats, and high up the river, a large beaver dam, the occupants of which I never had the good fortune to set eyes on. Amongst the smaller mammalia was the little ground-hog, a kind of marmot, nearly the size of a rabbit, whose burrows were quite common.

I must not, however, omit from the list of wild animals one which constantly made its presence felt during our wanderings. The beautiful and, alas! evil-smelling skunk was not uncommon, but I never got to close quarters with him save on one occasion. I had gone up the river to the Lazybogan Camp and taken possession of the log-hut which one of us generally occupied on these occasions. It was not long before I found out that the premises were already tenanted. A family of skunks had established themselves under the floor of the hut. I could hear them scratching and scuffling underneath the boards, and I could most unmistakably smell them. It was unpleasant but tolerable, except when something happened to upset the equanimity of the household. They greatly resented, for example, my morning ablutions, which were noisy and involved the splashing of a good deal of cold water, some of which no doubt percolated to the family quarters. They showed their resentment by a liberal use of poison gas, which fairly drove me out of the house; but we got used to one another after a time, and ended by making *bon ménage*. H. A., who relieved me when I went down, was less fortunate. On his first evening he caught sight of the mother skunk as she left her home through a bolt-hole, which was evidently the ordinary means of ingress and egress. H. A. saw his opportunity, and proceeded to "stop her out." No earth was ever more carefully closed, but the result was deplorable. The young family were disconsolate for the absence of their dam; the lady on her side was inconsolable, and hung about the place all night, making herself extremely objectionable. H. A. had a bad time of it, and took out the stopping next morning. Those who have

sat in a stuffy church near a lady wearing a skunk stole or muff will be able to form some idea of his discomfort.

The birds were few, but interesting. As you travelled along the river you constantly came upon a beautiful night heron flapping lazily along the stream. Not infrequently one met with a so-called "fish-hawk"—an osprey of some kind, I think—much interested in the capture of trout in the shoal water. Then there were partridges, really wood grouse, very tame, and unmolested by us, as we were there during the breeding season. Large kingfishers had their homes in the steep sand-banks, and gave a note not unlike that of their Australian relative, the "laughing jackass." Woodpeckers were common, and their holes were noticeable on the trunks of many of the decayed or partly dead trees. After dark the night-jars made themselves heard; the hurtling sound of their flight as they swooped unseen across some forest clearing was indescribably weird and ghostlike.

In my brief enumeration of the animals which frequented the Cascapedia I see that I have forgotten to mention the insects. These are by no means a negligible quantity. Mosquitoes, black flies, and sand-flies are a formidable triple alliance. I suffered less than most of us, and sand-flies, although maddening, are, I think, not more maddening than Scotch or Irish midges; but to most of our visitors the flies were a real terror. There were many remedies, some of them worse almost than the disease, notably a horrible brown unguent with which we were expected to smear our faces. Pieces of rag dipped in malodorous essences were not quite so bad. Veils which interfered with one's breathing and clung to one's skin when one was perspiring were, I thought, intolerable. When driven to desperation, I found that the best plan was to light a "smudge" in the canoe. A smudge is a little fire of touch-wood which can be kindled in a glue-pot, and when fairly set going, supplemented by a little damp moss, so as to produce a dense column of pungent smoke. This the mosquitoes at any rate will not face; and by keeping close to the smudge, and yet not within its fumes, it is possible to elude the enemy; but, as I have said before, I was fortunate, which was more than I could say for all our visitors. One of them, a rather full-blown, well-nourished Britisher, was a sight for gods and men after a fortnight's experience of Cascapedia insects. I feel pretty sure that newcomers suffer more than those who have already undergone the experience, and it has always seemed to me probable that the human blood, if once it has been inoculated with the mosquito virus, may become comparatively immune afterwards.

Butterflies were plentiful, notably the beautiful swallow-tail. My sons, who like most boys were keen ento-

mologists, once caught a black variety of this species, which they were told by the experts was rare and valuable, but they never got a second.

Of trees I have said something elsewhere. Amongst the shrubs none were more beautiful than the so-called high bush cranberries, a Cornus of some kind, bearing great clusters of scarlet fruit not unlike its Irish relative to be found on most of the Kerry streams. Of small wild flowers there were any number, including a tiny and very beautiful orchid —I believe the most northerly species of its kind. On the beaches and sand-banks an Œnothera was common and very attractive.

I must not forget the berry-bearing plants, which were numerous, particularly on the slopes where the high forest had been burnt,—cranberries, bear-berries, crow-berries, partridge berries, and so forth. Some of these were most interesting and attractive; the last-named was, I think, a dwarf Gaultheria, creeping along the ground almost like thyme, with its festoons ornamented at intervals by pure white, pearl-like fruits. But I must not omit the edible berries. There were thickets of raspberries in every direction, and nothing could have been more delicious than their fruit. It yielded, when pressed, an admirable syrup, wholly unconnected with raspberry vinegar, for which, even in my school-days, I had no great taste. A wine-glass of this syrup, added to a tumbler of iced water, was a glorious beverage for a thirsty soul. In the open spaces wild strawberries were plentiful, particularly at the edge of the sandy beaches, and I used often to tramp across these and take advantage of my opportunities while the men poled the canoe up-stream.

The trudge across these beaches was interesting in other ways. It was generally possible to find among the pebbles good specimens of agate and jasper brought down from the volcanic formations of the St Anne's range. Some of these I had polished and still preserve. As a rule my specimens were of small size, but now and again I encountered, and could not resist carrying off, a large lump, perhaps of ordinary rock with a likely nodule of agate bedded within it. My men, who at first regarded my proceedings as a kind of harmless lunacy, began after a time to look ruefully at me when I returned to the canoe bearing with me such weighty treasures. They finally represented to me respectfully that we were already heavily laden with the spoils of the chase, that our Plimsoll-line was all too low, and that several pounds' weight of precious stones was a wholly uncalled-for handicap. I had to be content with smaller specimens, surreptitiously smuggled on board in my jacket pockets.

How much or how little ought I to say in these notes as to our own performances in the fishing line? A mere reprint of our journals would be

monotonous and unintelligible to an outsider. I may as well, however, give here the summary of our catch during the four seasons. We caught amongst us 1245 salmon, weighing 29,188 lb., an average of 23½ lb. 210 of these fish weighed 30 lb. and over, and the largest weighed 45 lb. The fishing season was very short, lasting from the second week in June to the end of July, after which time there were other calls to meet, while the river became too low for fishing. It should, perhaps, be explained that our party consisted of the writer and his little staff, assisted now and again by the ladies. Besides these there were occasional visitors, amongst them Sir Lionel Sackville-West, then Minister at Washington, Lord Alexander Russell, in command at Halifax, Admiral Commerell, and two or three others.

We always did our greatest execution during the first three weeks, when the river was still full of water. After that it fell rapidly to a low summer level, with only occasional freshets anxiously watched for by all of us. Towards the end of the time it became difficult to inveigle a fish into rising. We had to depend mainly upon the evening fishing, and to use quite small flies.

The high average weight of our fish compels attention. We caught scarcely any grilse. I never understood why this was so. Was there an autumn run of grilse? The men had apparently never heard of it. I think we could have collected heavier bags if we had fished all day, but as a general rule we were content with an hour or two in the early morning and another spell when the sun got low. During the intervening hours there was plenty of time for reading and writing, and perhaps for a siesta in the verandah.

The summary gives an idea of the number and size of the fish caught. It may, however, be interesting to single out a few specimen days when exceptional good fortune attended our efforts. H. A. was a born statistician, and kept a journal in which is entered the weight of every fish and the place and date of its capture. From this interesting record I select the items which follow.

During the season of 1884 I find that on the 29th July I caught in the Upper or Lazybogan pools ten fish, weighing 33, 24, 11, 9, 20, 24, 9, 22, 22, and 21 lb. On the following day and on the same water, but higher up, Lord Alexander Russell killed eight fish, weighing 18, 18, 18, 10, 10, 8, 24, and 28 lb. This 3-pounder was much the smallest specimen which we collected.

In the season of 1885, on the 23rd June, I am credited with nine fish, weighing 26, 23, 25, 10, 27½, 29, 30, 38, and 23½ lb. This catch was made when I was on my way down from the Middle Camp. I caught one fish before starting. Seven were caught in a pool known as "Little Picot," which we had not intended to fish, but it looked well, and there was a nice beach from

which it could be commanded. Casting from this beach, I caught the fish, and then made the best of my way home. I went out for a few minutes in the evening and tried the pool opposite the house, which yielded the ninth fish.

On the following day I had eight in the home pools, weighing 24, 31, 25, 22, 25, 27, 33½, and 22 lb.

I see that I pleaded guilty to having lost six fish on each of these two days.

On the 24th Mr Herbert Smith had five, weighing 40, 25, 28, 25, and 30 lb., and on the 27th the same fisherman caught two, weighing 25 and 45 lb.

On the 3rd July H. A. landed eight fish, weighing 19½, 28½, 26, 11, 20½, 29, 22, and 21½ lb., and lost five.

On the 20th July Lord Alexander Russell fished the Lazybogan pools and caught ten fish weighing 209 lb. On the following day he had four weighing 119 lb. On the 22nd he had twelve weighing 245 lb., on the 23rd five weighing 93 lb., and on the 24th nine weighing 197 lb.

From the records of 1886 I extract the following:—

June 16th. The Hon. John Baring, now Lord Revelstoke, five fish, weighing 38½, 31½, 32½, 30½, and 22 lb., a goodly average. On the following day Mr Baring caught seven, weighing 32½, 25, 25½, 20, 18½, 19, and 25 lb.

On the 22nd June I had rather an exceptional piece of good fortune. I had caught a nice 25-pounder before breakfast close to the Home Camp. In the afternoon I travelled up to the Middle Camp, reaching my destination about 5 o'clock. After tea, between 6 P.M. and 8 P.M., I caught four fish, the only ones that I moved; they weighed 39, 33, 31, and 33 lb. I have an idea that for an evening's fishing this would be difficult to beat.

On the 5th July, fishing the Home pools, I caught seven, weighing 28, 28, 22, 28, 8, 33, and 25 lb., and lost three. On the 10th July I caught in the same pools four fish, weighing 35, 28, 25, and 38 lb., and next day two, weighing 29½ and 30 lb.

On the 15th July Lord Alexander Russell caught nine fish, weighing 32, 30, 30, 25, 20½, 23, 28, 29½, and 9½ lb.

Passing to the season of 1887, when we did not reach the river until nearly the end of June, I note that on my first day, the 27th, I had eight fish, weighing 22, 22, 28, 33, 24, 27, 25, and 23 lb., on the Home pools; and next day, on the same pools, eight, weighing 18, 25, 22, 23, 28, 38, 37, and 18 lb.

The staff also did well, H. S. securing on the 27th, on Limestone, nine fish, weighing 32½, 28, 21, 23, 11, 33, 23, 26, and 21 lb.; while on June 28th H. A., on Jam Rapids, had ten, weighing 27½, 24, 13½, 26, 8, 27, 20, 28, 27½, and 24½ lb.

On July 1st, fishing the Middle Camp pools, I had eight fish: weights, 30, 24, 22, 24, 30, 24½, 34½, and 29 lb.

On the 13th and 14th July, on the Lazybogan pools, I had

good sport, catching on each of those days ten fish; the twenty averaged 24½ lb. H. S., who was with me, on the same two days caught nine and eleven, which he followed up by eight on the 16th, and the same number on the 18th of the month.

Of fish weighing 40 lb. and more we caught one in 1884, three in 1885, two in 1886, and one in 1887; but we had a large number of fish which approached, but did not reach, the 40-lb. standard. The season of 1884 yielded 36 fish, that of 1885, 54 fish, that of 1886, 65 fish, and that of 1887, 55 fish over 30 lb.

If there were good days and brilliant successes, there were also disappointments and tragedies. The memory of some of these is indelibly impressed on my mind. I can still visualise the huge fish which I hooked in "Jack the Sailor," at the very beginning of my Cascapedia days, which, after running out the greater part of my line, leaped into the air and then parted company. If ever I saw a 50-pounder it was that fish. I remember another which played me for an interminable time in the thin water below the Ledge Pool. I could do nothing with him; he lay like a log in mid-stream and refused obstinately to come near us. At last we poled our way out to him and got quite close, but the hold parted at the last moment. The fish was so tired that Noel very nearly had him with the gaff after I had lost him.

But there is one tragedy in particular of which the details are unforgettable. One day in 1884 I was fishing at Lazybogan just below the camp. Towards dusk I got fast in what was evidently a very strong fish. I had noticed that fish hooked late in the evening always showed an uncontrollable desire to run violently down-stream. This fish was no exception to the rule. I hung hard on to him, but he took us down and ever down until we found ourselves at a point where the stream, which here flowed at a great pace, divided into several channels, separated by narrow spits of shingle. Across one of these channels a dead birch, brought down by the flood, had become fixed. My fish elected to rush down the birch-tree channel just as the men had committed the canoe to the next. Things looked bad, but this obstacle was overcome: canoe and fish both navigated their channels without mishap—the boughs of the birch-tree sloped down stream, and the line passed over them without getting caught. We met our fish again below the narrow island of shingle which had parted us, after which he renewed his headlong course. Finally, having found a resting-place to his liking, he went to ground in a deep hole from which I tried in vain to dislodge him: in spite of pressure applied from above and below his place of refuge, he was immovable. I tried to hand-line him up from the bottom, but it became clear that he had

literally taken root in the mass of brushwood and debris which lay half-buried at the bottom in the silt. We came to the conclusion that I was now fast, not in the fish but in the rubbish, and we set to work to get loose, and if possible, to save the line and cast. After probing the depths with his gaff, Barter (who was then my attendant) at last got hold of the right bough, and the line suddenly became slack. I proceeded to reel up with a sad heart, when suddenly to my amazement I felt a quiver of life, and realised that my fish was still there. The rough usage to which he had been subjected had taken all the vice out of him. He came in like a lamb, and I felt that I could tow him wherever I liked. There was a little backwater a few yards off, with a beautiful gravelly slope on one side—an ideal landing-place.—I think I could have beached my fish unaided. I got out of the canoe and drew him gently and steadily into the shoal water. He was virtually mine. But at this moment Barter was seized by an access of dementia: it was the call of the wild, the instinct of the old salmon-spearing blood. Before I could stop him he made a frantic lunge at the fish with his ten-foot gaff. That was the end; he missed the fish, and cut my line in two. Our long journey upstream, past the narrows which we had so successfully negotiated, was a melancholy affair. I never got a sight of the fish, and do not know how big he was. I comforted myself with the reflection that he may have been foul-hooked and not so very large after all.

Here is the story of what might have been a tragedy, although the adventure had its comical side. H. A. was fishing the Limestone Pool; he hooked a good fish, and his bow man proceeded as usual to haul in the stone anchor. The rope broke, the anchor went to the bottom, and the man fell out of the canoe on the other side. The canoe upset, and H. A. and his two men found themselves struggling in the water. They could none of them swim, but were fortunately close to the bank, and succeeded in scrambling out. They were a long way from home, with a trackless jungle on either bank, and without the means of conveyance by water. They set out down-stream in search of the missing craft. Two or three hundred yards below there was a shingly bar running more than half-way across the river. The swamped canoe had stranded upon this, and was soon righted and afloat again. One of the paddles was still on board, the other was found not far off. As the search proceeded, they came upon H. A.'s rod, which had also grounded on the shingle. H. A. proceeded to get in the line, and found to his joy that the fish was still attached to it. It was landed without difficulty, and the party paddled down to camp drenched to the skin, but triumphant. I must not omit the sequel of this story. H. A. had a few days

before received a large and expensive consignment of salmon-flies from a well-known tackle-shop in London. He had most unfortunately taken out with him a large round tin box, the magazine in which the whole of this valuable tackle was enshrined. The tin box went overboard with other odds and ends, and was written off as lost. About a week afterwards a lad came up to our camp from a farm on one of the lower pools with a fine, though not quite complete, collection of salmon-flies, which had been found in the meshes of one of the stake-nets.

One more adventure. I have seen it said that "all fishermen are liars," and on the strength of the story that I am going to tell I shall perhaps qualify for enrolment in the fraternity. It all happened in "Jack the Sailor," which was, I think, upon the whole, my favourite pool. It was not too far from home; it always held fish, generally large fish; and it was extremely dangerous, which perhaps added to its attractions. At this point the river flows between low cliffs surmounted by a thick growth of trees. Ribs of jagged rock run out into its depths, and could be plainly seen at low water, twenty or thirty feet below the surface. Here and there great water-logged snags had become firmly lodged among them. The whole arrangement was a standing invitation to a hooked fish to cut himself free. The wonder was, not that one lost fish, but that fish were ever landed amid such a maze of entanglements. One fish out of "Jack the Sailor" was to my mind worth three caught in any other pool. I used often, when going down the river late in the evening, to stop for a couple of casts in "Jack," although I knew that another canoe must have been there not long before, and I more than once succeeded in stealing a fish out of it just as it was becoming dark.

Bitter experience had taught me that there was one way, and one way only, to avoid disaster. If you allowed your fish to explore the fastnesses of "Jack the Sailor" you would most certainly lose him, and probably your tackle also. The only chance was to prevent such exploration at any cost, to get him tight by the head, and to hang hard on to him, even at the risk of a break. With a stiff rod and sound tackle you can put a terrific strain on a firmly hooked salmon. I am, by the way, convinced that more fish are lost by over-tender handling than by more vigorous methods.

One day in 1885 I was applying my principles to a very stout fish, keeping him near the canoe in the clear water, and checking him whenever he tried to take soundings. After he had made one or two strong drives and been met with an equally strong application of the butt, he suddenly yielded to the pressure, shot up to the surface within two or three feet of us, threw himself high out of the water, and landed

almost in Noel's arms between the thwarts of the canoe. He would certainly have jumped overboard again had not Noel driven the gaff firmly into his side.

All this happened on a Saturday. On Sundays there used to be a great gathering of the boatmen at Woodman's Farm. On the following Monday I asked Noel whether he had said anything to his friends about our fish. He replied that he had told Mr Woodman all about it. "What," I asked, "did Mr Woodman say?" "He said," replied Noel, "for me to come in and have a glass of whisky," and with this oracular utterance my story must end.

Many years after I had said good-bye to the Cascapedia, I happened on a warm June evening to be passing through the back garden of a London house, in which half a dozen grimy trees were struggling into leaf amid a dingy and depressing environment. Suddenly something took me away from London and back to Canada and to the river. What was it? There was a reason. One of the trees was a poplar, a balsam poplar; there were the sticky buds and the aromatic and intoxicating scent. For a moment I seemed to see the old sights, to smell the old smells, to hear the old sounds — the rush of the rapids, the perfume of the forest, the clinking of the iron-shod poles, as the canoe forged its way upwards to the Middle Camp or to Lazybogan.

ESCAPE.

A TALE.

BY EDWARD LIVEING.

I.

I WAS a subaltern in the Sappers at the time. I had not been in Palestine long before finding myself at a place called Es Salt during a raid into Turkish territory beyond the Jordan in the spring of 1918.

Es Salt was one of those "whited sepulchre" towns which you so often come across in Palestine—all glittering in the sun and spotlessly bright from a distance, and nothing but dirty streets covered with dung-heaps and inhabited by cunning-looking Bedouins and sprawling curs, and houses infested with insects, when you get into them.

Still, to give Es Salt its due, it was a little cleaner than the average run of "whited sepulchres," and it was remarkably picturesque—a kind of natural amphitheatre, in which the tiers of seats were houses built into and crannied out of a rocky hollow in the hills of Moab.

I had reached Es Salt three days before, and now towards evening on 1st April I found myself in the peculiar position of shepherding Armenian refugees, or the few stragglers of them remaining, out of the town. You see, the raid or its objectives had been attained, the whole British force was withdrawing to the Jordan Valley, taking these refugees with it, and the Turks were steadily closing in on Es Salt.

My job wasn't a pleasant one; I can tell you that much. These affairs in which one is left behind are never enjoyable. But a scanty knowledge of Arabic and a decent one of French had let me in for the task. So with the attitude of fatalism which helped one to face many a trouble in those days, but which I have since decided is an entirely false one, I set about my work.

All day the refugees had streamed out of the town along the zigzag mountain road that led into the gorge of the Shaib. A babel of weird shouting had arisen from relations and friends searching for each other before setting out together. Later in the day babel became more angry with echoing thunder of guns in the hills around the town and the ever-nearing rattle of machine-guns. Towards afternoon a sandstorm descended on the town, blotting out the surrounding hills and leaving so

much sand in the air, even after it had passed, as to spread an uncanny darkness over everything.

The exodus of refugees seemed as if it would never cease. There were camels weighted with huge packages of carpets and sometimes even furniture; there were donkeys, one I remember with an enormous brass cauldron on its back, others carrying women and children, the husband or some male relative walking beside them with a stick, and the groups reminding one of pictures of the flight of the Holy Family out of Egypt.

I had spent the whole day in walking round from house to house and hut to hut explaining to the inhabitants as well as I could that, if they wished to be freed from the detested Turk, this would be their last chance for some time to come. I had some amusing experiences, especially in a harem into which I trespassed accidentally, and in which I narrowly escaped getting knifed; but that is another story. . . .

After a time I had become so engrossed in seeing Arabs and Armenians depart, and giving them advice as to where to go, also in the removal of sick refugees, that I had almost forgotten about time and the fact that I was in a town about to pass into enemy hands.

Suddenly darkness began to descend quickly, as it always does out East, and menacingly, as though it wished to envelop the evacuation with confusion. Nearer and nearer down the Amman road came the soft stealthy tramp of the withdrawing columns of infantry. These were the rearguard of the whole force, so that, when they had gone, no defence remained between the town and the Turks. There was nothing left for me to do but to make my departure with them.

By the time I reached the main road the shadowy fours, weary and bent under their packs, but muttering jests in their relief at leaving the uncannily isolated positions that rearguard troops must take up, were flickering almost silently through the streets. I made my way through a gap in the column to the spot where my groom held our two horses on the farther side of the street.

As I came up, he remarked—

"There's a girl as wants to speak to yer, sir."

"Where?" I asked hurriedly, for there was little time left for conversations.

"Here, sir. She's standin' by you."

The stars and moon had not made their appearance. What was my astonishment, therefore, when a young musical voice started to talk to me, out of the darkness in French, made rather rich by the slight drawl and over-accentuated "e" that Eastern people often impart to it. Gradually I found myself caught up in a most astounding tale of passion, intrigue, and hate, the climax of which had taken

place to-day, when the owner of the voice had freed herself from a harem by stabbing its master with "three strokes of a poignard, until he fell back, the villain, on to the floor,—dead, dead, dead!"

The voice became agitated, choked with sobs. The tramp of feet had almost subsided. We should have to get on. I told my groom to follow up the infantry, and that I would join him later. Hardly knowing what to do with the girl, I reached out my hand into the darkness and patted her on the back, trying to console her with a few words.

A series of surprises followed this act of mine. The girl's arms suddenly closed round my neck, and her voice sobbed to me to take her away "out of the horror of it all." She was obviously terrified, and had murdered the Arab fellow out of sheer desperation, and she did not want to fall into the hands of the Turks.

I was about to give her some vague answer, when the moon rose and I found myself gazing into eyes so dark as in the silver light to appear jet-black, set in a soft oval face, pale beneath a bronzed olive complexion. No wonder men had fought over this girl. She was like a soft breeze out of the Arabian desert whence she had travelled. And I, who had not seen a beautiful woman for months, had not even spoken to any woman in that land of exile, bent down impulsively to kiss that little red quivering mouth, more as one would kiss a child than anything else. I stopped, because I saw a look of customary fear grow in her eyes. . . .

All of a sudden there was a big flash near us, more flashes, and a series of detonations. Men came running down the road. These were the Engineers left behind to blow up the remainder of the Turkish ammunition. They had done their work and were clearing off as quickly as possible. Spurts of flame licked out from different parts of the town, and a continuous crackling like musketry broke from the piles of burning rifle ammunition.

A limber with several men on board, and followed by two officers on horseback, dashed down the street. The officers must have seen me, for they called back, "You had better look out. . . . Johnny will be in the town in a minute."

Waiting no longer, I picked up the girl (she was so light), placed her in front of the saddle, and mounted behind her.

A minute later we were careering wildly down the zig-zag road. Turning a sudden corner that took us on to a strip of road beneath the town, I looked up to see several flashes overhead. A stone, kicked up I thought by the horse's fore-hoof, stung me cruelly in the calf. I experienced a violent momentary pain, cursed, and then urged on the horse as hard as she could go.

. . . . . .

Moments of excitement are apt afterwards to become blurred in one's memory.

Strawberry, my mare, kept up a kind of canter for at least ten minutes. We lurched round sudden curves beneath high overhanging rocks, went at the double down bits of road churned into a muddy morass by rain and traffic. How we never plunged off the road and fell down the precipice to the river-bed on our left I do not know, except that Strawberry was always a safe-goer even in the semi-darkness.

When I felt we had put enough distance between ourselves and a possible advanced Turkish cavalry patrol, I drew rein hard. Strawberry dropped into a jog-trot.

It was then that I began to feel that the whole affair was unreal. A sensation of drowsiness assailed me, and the Armenian girl, looking more wild and beautiful than ever, as her head rested on my shoulders with her eyes opening and shutting in a half-sleep, the occasional whinnying of the horse, and the weird echoing of the torrent beneath as it thundered through the shadowy gorge roofed over by a bluish sky full of stars and moonlight, seemed nothing more than a dream.

I tried hard to shake off this drowsiness, but was unable to do so. I had to face difficulties ahead, such as the immediate problem of crossing the river at El Howeij a few miles farther on. The bridge would probably have been blown up by now. We should have to cross the stream. Perhaps the stream was mined. . . . That was unpleasant. But I could not bring myself to face or conquer the difficulty. I seemed to be swimming among the stars, and the blue sky, and a mass of ever-rolling hills. . . . The sounds of the horse's hoofs and the torrent beneath persisted in receding to a greater distance, in becoming fainter and fainter. I had, as it were, to keep bringing their noise nearer to me, louder, so as to retain consciousness.

Hammer! Hammer! Hammer! On and on we went. Suddenly we turned a bend in the road, and beneath us, just discernible in the darkness, I could see it zigzag down to the river—and over the river lay, yes, still intact, the bridge. Once more I urged Strawberry to a canter; we swung round the "S" curve half-way down the descent, and turned back towards the bridge. In another minute we would be across it and safe. Probably those engineers had told the fellows at the bridge to wait a minute or two for us. I had never expected this, otherwise I should not have ambled along so slowly as I had. Anyhow, here was our chance, and we must take it.

Perhaps the girl realised this, for she was bending over Strawberry's mane and looking ahead with a strained fixity. Neither of us spoke. It would not have helped.

"Keep it going, old thing," I whispered down to Strawberry's outstretched right ear. "Keep it going. Oop, oop, oop. That's the stuff. Good old horse."

We got down to the bridge in a canter. I reined in Strawberry twenty yards away. She broke into a trot. I pulled her up just in front of it.

I jumped down, intending to lift the girl off the horse and leave her to look after it while I went to look at the bridge. As I reached ground a sudden twinge of pain ran up my calf. I looked down and saw a jagged hole through the puttees on my left leg, out of which came a runlet of blood. Then the bridge, the stream, the mountains on either side of the gorge, and the blue roof of the sky swam round and round and round.

"Il ne faut pas traverser le pont," I managed to gasp out before entering into the land of darkness. . . .

. . . . . .

When I came to, I was lying on my back on the road. How solitary the place was! Only the ceaseless chirping of the crickets. I cared not a straw how near the Turks might be. A sleepiness, a feeling of powerlessness had crept over me.

I felt some one tugging at the left side of my tunic, and looked down to see my protégée trying to unloose my water-bottle. The sort of nun's hood which she wore had fallen back from her head. A great mass of black hair descended over her cloak. Her face was in darkness.

In another minute a cool strong hand came under my neck and lifted my head.

"Drink, mon ami," she commanded me.

She placed the mouthpiece to my lips and tilted my head back till my eyes looked into the moving panorama of clouds and stars, and the cold water, like elixir descending from the heavens above, poured into me and suffused strength. My mind began to take stock of what had happened. I sat up, looking down to my left leg. The puttees had been taken off. A white bandage tied tightly gleamed round the calf.

"Wonderful woman," I thought, realising that she had had the presence of mind to look for my field dressing, and the knowledge of how to tie a bandage.

She must have seen the surprise in my face, for she said softly—

"I am used to that."

There was a little break in her voice. Her face was now turned towards the moon as she knelt by me, and I distinctly saw tears glittering in her eyes. Suddenly my mind was travelling through the Arabian desert to far-distant Armenia, and glimpses of this young lithe figure, bending over other men by the roadside—father, brothers, a lover, perhaps—flickered before my eyes. It seemed impossible.

I was almost dreaming from sheer exhaustion, I suppose, when a rhythmical beating sound rose out of the road beneath my head. Instinctively my heart started to thump and my brain to work.

I sat up again. Yes; there was no doubt about the matter.

Those were horses' hoofs coming along at a slow trot, but all the same, getting nearer, nearer, nearer. . . .

The girl was listening intently.

"They are Turkish cavalry," she remarked suddenly.

"How do you know that?" I asked foolishly.

"They are riding Arab horses," she replied.

"But, surely, you can't see them?"

"No, mon ami, I can hear them."

I tottered to my feet. I hardly know how I did it. "We must get the horse," I whispered hurriedly.

She had disappeared into the semi-darkness. In a moment she was back, fear in her eyes. "It has gone. I tied it to an ash-tree twenty yards down the road. It has smashed the branch I tied it to. It has gone." She wrung her hands.

"Why couldn't you have tied it to something firmer?" I gasped. I was exasperated.

"Strawberry," I shouted; "come here, old girl. Come along, come on, hey, hey, hey."

My voice echoed weirdly round the gorge till it died away, and no sounds remained but the creaking of the crickets all around us and the loudening horse-hoofs beating down the road.

Strawberry must have strayed back along the road. She could not have crossed the bridge, otherwise we should have seen her. My brain worked quickly. There was nothing for it but to descend into the river-bed, walk down it as far as we could and conceal ourselves. After that? Well, after that everything was uncertain.

We stumbled into the stream beneath the bridge. The cold water buoyed me up, kept me going. The girl supported me on my left side. Her arm was round my waist. She was astoundingly strong.

We must have got nearly two hundred yards down stream when she pointed to the left side.

"Let us stay here," she suggested. "It is a good spot."

A minute later I was lying back exhausted, with unpleasant twinges in my left leg, on a soft strip of grassy ground just above the stream. The sound of horses' hoofs thundered over the bridge, died away, and came on again along the road at the top of the precipice at whose foot we lay. Then it disappeared altogether.

"Gone," I sighed in relief. "Thank God for that, anyhow."

We were now in enemy territory, but at least they hadn't scented us out so far.

I felt a hand nestle into mine. I grasped it close, saying—

"Merci, mon camarade."

As I began to sink into sleep, the picture on which my eyes closed was that of a draped figure, surmounted by a wild yet innocent-looking, beautiful yet sad face, sitting intent.

We were alone, my comrade and I, shut off from our friends,

hidden from our enemies, but we were alone together. The hand in mine told me that, and the song of the crickets all round us that closed in our solitary comradeship.

. . . . . .

I awoke to find myself gazing through the swaying branches of an ash-tree at a blue sky with fleecy clouds in it. For a moment I could not quite realise my circumstances. The roar of a mountain stream reached my ears, and I looked down to see my comrade standing in the waters of the Shaib and throwing them up over her face.

She came up the hill in her bare dripping feet, holding her sandals in her hand. With the water glistening the bronze of her face, and the sun picking out the red band round her hood, the ebony necklaces and little cross round her bare open neck, and the golden-coloured bracelets round her brown fore-arms, she looked more beautiful than ever.

We made a meal out of my emergency rations, in which bully-beef and biscuits played their usually large part. I felt very much better for my long sleep. I ate well, and I made jokes about the emergency rations. We laughed cautiously, and I sat back making myself produce more and more jokes in order to see her white teeth open in laughter, and close again without any difficulty on those brick-like biscuits. I kept on thinking to myself, "I've never seen a healthier example of girlhood. She's simply splendid. I could trust her as much as a man in a scrap."

It was only after our breakfast that I began to get despondent. I had a look at my wound. It was really a very slight affair, nothing much more than a scratch, but in some peculiar way the impact of the bullet had twisted and sprained my ankle. This, of course, was the reason of my sudden collapse on putting foot to ground last night. But I could never possibly effect an immediate escape by walking down into the Jordan Valley, and, if we waited more than a day or two in our present hiding-place, we should starve, since we only had enough food left for one more meal.

A sound of horse-hoofs intruded itself into my thoughts, and there, coming steadily down the zigzag road on the opposite side of the gorge, was at least a troop of Turkish cavalry. Shaded by our ash-tree, I looked carefully at the horsemen through my field-glasses. They were all mounted on little, black, wiry Arab horses, except the officer, who rode well out in front of them on a large-boned bay mount. My glasses made a little picture of the horse and the man. The sun was shining on them, and I could even distinguish the man's moustache beneath his fez cap of black fur.

Ten minutes later the party of horsemen had ridden down into the valley. Now we could not see the bridge from our position down the river, but when, after some time, I did not hear the sound of hoofs

on the road above us, and cries came down the gorge from the direction of the bridge, I began to wonder what was happening.

"I must go and find out what's up," I muttered more to myself than the girl beside me; but as I started to my feet she literally pushed me back, rose herself, and was soon creeping up through the deep grass on the other side of the ravine. After mounting in this way about forty feet, she stopped and gazed in the direction of the bridge. Then she climbed very carefully downwards.

"What are they doing?" I asked, as she reached our shelter.

"They put up their bivouacs on this side of the wadi," she answered. "They have tethered their horses down by the stream. There are twenty of them. Monsieur l'officier—a big fat man—is putting up a little tent above the road near the bridge, and his horse is tethered near it."

"Well done, little comrade. You would make a first-rate soldier."

Our plan of campaign for that night came to me in a flash.

"They'll have a sentry on guard over the bivouacs and horses by the bridge to-night," I explained to the girl, "but no one will guard the horse of monsieur l'officier; and if," I added with a laugh, "as you say, he is a big fat man, he will sleep soundly, and his snores will cover the noise of our footsteps. Yes; we will creep up the hill to the road above us, cross it, and make a dash for that horse; and when we have it, we will ride as hard as we can down the road to Shunet Nimrin and the Jordan Valley. What do you say to that?"

I was sitting up quite flushed with this return of hope and the excitement before us. I felt the girl's hand on my shoulder, and found her looking into my face with an expression of mixed pity and admiration, like that of my mother when, ten years before, I once told her that I was going to smash the school bully next term.

"And what about your poor leg, mon ami?"

"Oh—that! Why, it's nothing! Nothing! Besides, we've got to get away to-night or we shall starve."

"As you wish, but——"

"Those are my orders," I interrupted, with an attempt at dignity.

She still looked anxious, however, and very tired, and I suddenly realised that all last night she must have kept awake on guard over me. I kissed her hand in an impulse of gratitude, saying, "You must sleep now, little one. You had no sleep all last night."

I made her lie down, put my bivouac-sheet under her head, and threw my blanket over her.

Soon her breathing came in long regular inhalations. I found myself watching her face, unable to take my eyes off it. How long I looked I

cannot say. Occasionally its repose was wakened into life by a smile that came and went, or—could I be sure?—a look of fear spreading across it and making the long black eyelashes quiver. Then the breathing came quickly and haltingly. Was she living through portions of her past life again, I questioned myself. I would begin to feel as if she was very far away from me, that the adventure which we were sharing was only one of the many incidents in her troubled life, that I had only been one of her many lovers. Rubbish! Of course I wasn't really in love with her. She was very beautiful, very brave, very remarkable in many ways, but it would be ridiculous, I repeated to myself, to say that I was really in love with her. And yet—well, I was thrilled with her presence so close beside me. I suddenly found myself bending over to kiss those small red lips. But as I was about to do so, I realised that I might only add terror to her dreams, and that I wanted her, when our adventure was over, to take away the memory of myself just as a comrade, perhaps the only man in her life beside her father and brother in whom she had been able to place implicit trust. . . .

The stream roared on beneath us, the sun was high in the heavens, the neighing of the restless Arab ponies and an occasional raucous shout from a Turkish soldier upstream echoed down the wadi. Gradually my thoughts became confused, and I sank back to sleep in the deep grass and poppies.

. . . . . .

When I awoke the sun was setting behind the hills, but a good deal of light still lingered in the gorge. Andrea (I now remembered her Christian name that she had told me the night before) was sitting up and listening intently.

"Andrea," I called softly.

She held up her hand to command silence.

"Some one is coming down the stream," she whispered.

I listened carefully. At first I could only hear the roar of the stream and the cry of the crickets welcoming the approach of darkness. Then I made out a kind of ringing noise—a man's nailed boots stepping on rocks. Then a swishing sound as he walked through long grass. I looked towards the direction of the sound along our side of the ravine to see a figure strolling up to our hiding-place. Andrea sprang noiselessly behind the ash-tree. I remained where I was, trusting in his not seeing me if I sat perfectly still.

The soldier was now only a few yards off. I could see him plainly. He was quite a boy, not more than eighteen, I should say. His sunburnt features were soft and pleasant-looking. He wore no hat, and his hair was rather closely cropped. His grey uniform was a little smarter than that of the average Turkish private.

He came nearer and nearer, stooping to pick flowers every now and then. I could hardly

feel that he was an enemy, but when he suddenly looked up about three yards away from me, I knew he had seen me, and an instinct of self-preservation urged me to my feet. He looked scared, and turned round to shout to his friends. I got up to him as quick as I could to knock him down, but before I reached him Andrea had leapt past me just like a cat; there was the flash of a knife in the darkening air, an unfinished groan, and a dull thud on the ground.

It was all over suddenly, before one could realise it, just as I have described. A feeling of horror and disgust passed through me. I pushed Andrea aside ruthlessly. I bent down over the hollow in the deep grass where the boy had fallen, and found myself stared at from a pair of unseeing eyes set in a face whose pallor beneath the sunburn told me that life had left it. On the side of the tunic there showed a blood-stained gash just above the heart. "How horribly exact," I remember thinking to myself. "Not an inch out."

Then I noticed the left hand still grasping a bunch of poppies and other flowers. It was the sight of this that affected me more than anything else. Why should this young fellow have been killed so suddenly in the midst of such an innocent occupation? My love of beauty, my artistic temperament grew sick, revolted. I turned round to Andrea and muttered angrily, "You little brute!"

I did not trouble to see the effect of my words, but knelt down and undid the boy's tunic around the neck. I found what I wanted—a little silver chain and an identification disc in the form of a crescent at the end of it. This was obviously not the usual kind of identification plate served out to the Turkish rank and file, and I concluded that his people must have been rich. As I went over the chain to find the clip that fastened it together, the back of my hand passed across the dead soldier's chest, and I can still feel, even to-night as I write about it, the warm glow of the flesh that had not yet turned cold. . . . I searched in the pockets and found nothing. Then I plucked handfuls of grass and covered the body with them.

A cloudy night had set in. I stumbled back to our ledge behind the ash-tree, hunted in my haversack, and found my electric torch.

"Andrea!" I whispered, when I had found it.

"Yes."

"Read this," I commanded, turning my torch on to the disc and shading it with my hands.

"Achmed Abdullah," she faltered, translating the Turkish into French haltingly, "Private . . . 11th Regiment . . . 2nd Caucasian . . . Cavalry . . . Brigade . . . Orderly to Bimbashi . . . Said . . . Evzi . . . effendi, who gave him . . . this tablet . . . in the month of Ramadan . . . 1917."

I put the torch and the disc in my haversack. Already I had decided that we must leave

our present position at once and climb up to the road above, so as to be ready to cross it and make our dash for the horse as soon as Bimbashi Said Evzi Effendi (I imagined it was he) was likely to be asleep, and so as to be out of the way in case an alarm was raised and the Turks started to search the gorge for their comrade. There was no time to lose.

"We must go," I announced coldly. I was still under the influence of the incident.

It was very dark, I could not see Andrea.

"We must go," I repeated.

The Shaib roared on beneath us, wildly and relentlessly. Death meant nothing to it, had no power to affect it. The crickets creaked exultantly in the long grass. I listened for an answer to my question. Gradually I distinguished a sound of weeping.

"Andrea!" I whispered more softly, "it's all right. I've forgiven you. Ce ne fait rien."

Suddenly she was whispering fiercely, sobbingly in my ear—

"Ah! you are an Englishman. That is all you are. Cold and cruel. If it had been another—another. . . . Can't you see that I killed that poor boy to save you? You . . . and you turn on me like this. . . . It is I to forgive you, not you to forgive me. . . ."

Her voice broke and she ceased whispering. I was so astounded for the moment that I could say nothing. I could not grip the reality of the whole affair. In the confused noise of the stream I seemed to hear laughter directed against myself, as though it were mocking: "Poor simple English soldier. Little you thought of ever being embroiled in difficulties like this. Ha! ha! ha! Take a leaf from my book. I never stop by the wayside for any quarrel, or any passion, or any incident. I sweep onwards, onwards. My only passion is to drive on to the end, and what end it will be I little care."

And I thought suddenly: "Your end! My God! Your end's only the Dead Sea. But mine, mine . . ."

Before I fully realised what had happened I was holding Andrea in my arms and kissing her madly and unrestrainedly. I believe that at first she resisted. She must still have been filled with anger against me. But I was so swept away by ecstatic emotion, call it love, or passion, or what you will, that I cared nothing even for her resistance. In her hair that blew round my neck with a gust of wind, in the soft beauty of her face, in the quiver of her slight body, I forgot everything—the roar of the Shaib, the black masses of surrounding hills, the cry of the crickets, the peril of our position.

. . . . . .

Suddenly this dream broke. I felt Andrea's body stiffen; I heard her whispering in my ear—

"Look out. They are coming up the wadi."

I released her. I looked and saw a lantern swinging to

and fro, coming towards us. Another lantern appeared. Raucous voices shouted to each other.

I picked up my haversack and whispered to Andrea. "Up—this way," almost pulling her after me.

We stumbled upwards through the deep grass, hidden rocks giving me such twinges of pain that I gasped with the effort to stay my groans. Andrea must have realised this, for I felt her right hand take mine and pull me up after her, and I heard her whisper—

"Courage, comrade. Only a little way farther . . . courage . . . courage."

Somehow these little whispers of hers introduced a comic element into our escape, and my emotions as we frantically climbed that hill were a mixture of fear, pain, and amusement. The grass faded away as we reached a sereeze. We tried to mount it and kept on slipping, sending showers of earth and rubble down into the gorge. I was terribly afraid that this would discover us to our enemies, but we could not spare time to look back. We tried to scramble up the sereeze on our hands and knees, but this was no more effective, and we only added to the volume of our gorge-ward showers.

If only the moon would show just for a moment. . . . Horror seized me. If the Turks captured us now—and it seemed as if they must do so sooner or later—I should probably be treated well, but what of Andrea? . . . I couldn't, I couldn't possibly let her be captured. I spurred myself on to further efforts. At last my hand came in contact with the branch of a small tree. The next moment I had swung myself upwards into its branches, and was lifting Andrea after me. We found ourselves in a little region of stunted bushes growing on the side of what was a precipice. We could never have got farther but for these growths, by which we hauled ourselves up and up, grabbing hold of first one and then another. It was dangerous going, but pleasanter to me than the first part of our climb, as it relieved my foot of too much work. As if to answer my prayers, the moon shone out of the clouds for a minute. I crawled over a round piece of rock and found myself on the edge of a white phosphorescent glimmer—the road.

But our troubles were not at an end. I looked down to see Andrea sitting safely but pantingly on the branch of a tree just beneath me. I was about to whisper to her to take hold of my hand when I heard a thunder of horses' hoofs on the bridge. This thunder did not abate. It grew into a continuous muffled roar. I looked down the phosphorescent road on whose edge I lay and saw a column of horsemen ride into its glimmering light. This column came nearer and nearer, trailing an ever-lengthening line behind it. For a moment I debated whether we had better cross

the road at once, or remain where we were. I decided on the latter course, as it offered us a safer hiding-place.

I could now distinctly see the officer commanding the column — a tall fine-looking man, with an enormous moustache, bending over and talking to a much smaller man, whom I took to be his adjutant. The head of the column was less than fifty yards away. I climbed down to a branch of a small tree opposite Andrea's and explained the situation to her. The moon fell back into the clouds, and we were once more wrapped in darkness. The banging of hoofs grew louder and louder. . . . At last the torrent of horses and men was above us, making a ceaseless metallic noise, like an electric instrument used in head massage, with which there mingled hoarse-shouted orders, guttural mutterings, the whinnying of nervous steeds. Dust and small stones spattered through the leaves around us.

How long we waited I cannot say. The luminous markings had faded from the face of my wrist-watch. At least a regiment, if not a whole brigade, went by. We spent the time by devouring the remains of our food — bully-beef and fragments of biscuits, and looking at the lights of the search-party in the wadi. They must have made a very thorough study of the ground, for more and more lanterns appeared on the farther side of the gorge as well as on our side. In fact, the search beneath had not ended when there came a lull in the roar above us. At first this lull was intermittent—various details, I supposed, in the rear of the column. Finally, a lull that was unbroken. We listened to the last horse hoofs clattering away into the darkness.

"Now," I said, "we must take our chance."

I did not tell Andrea that I thought it a very poor one. I hardly expected Said Evzi Effendi to be lying asleep, undisturbed at the disappearance of his orderly; and even if we collared his horse I was very uncertain as to our ever reaching the Jordan Valley with all those Turks in front of us.

Suddenly the moon appeared out of a big blue rift in the clouds, and a second afterwards a loud cry came out of the depths beneath us. I experienced that horrible sensation of an interrupted heart-beat. They had found the body, of course . . . and, if they had found the body, they would soon trace our tracks up the hill through the deep grass. . . . Driven into action, I climbed again over the smooth rock and pulled Andrea after me. We stood on the road in full moonlight.

"Now then for it!" I whispered, and we raced down that strip of phosphorescence as fast as my leg would let me, and that was pretty fast, for my ankle was much better. As we ran, the unreality of the whole affair struck me in a fantastically powerful way.

My mind went back to a performance of amateur theatricals in which I had had to run across the stage in the limelight. In this case, however, it was over a hundred yards to the wings. We came out of light into darkness—the shadow of a high out-jutting rock on the right of the road. Andrea pointed into a dark stretch of grass lying dimly in the shadow a little further down the road.

"That's the place," she gasped,

I confess that I was fairly agitated by now. Bolting headlong into the grass, I fell over a soft yielding object. There was a rent of canvas and snapping of poles. In a second I realised that I had fallen over Said Evzi's bivouac, and thanked God under my breath that Said Evzi was not there to receive me.

"The horse. Here is the horse," Andrea whispered to me from a short distance.

I picked myself up and sprang towards the voice. In a moment I was feeling my way over the horse. No reins, no saddle, no harness at all!

"Good heavens!" I gasped under my breath, realising all at once the stupidity of my belief that the horse would be harnessed up.

To this hour I hardly know how we harnessed that animal. I dimly remember groping about in the long grass with my torch, finding the harness in a heap by another bivouac, which I suppose belonged to the groom. (I noticed his boots sticking out of the end of it,) I remember swaying back with this heap to the horse. I remember throwing reins and harness and saddle roughly on to it. I remember Andrea's and my hands meeting in fastening the belly-band. I remember mounting after Andrea from the right side, as I was unable to manage it from the left. I remember digging my right leg furiously into the horse's thigh, how it whinnied and stumbled slowly down on to the road, how as we reached the road a lantern was turned into my face and a man shouted. I remember firing my revolver at the light and missing it, and the next moment clutching the horse's neck as it bounded forward into a gallop. I remember, too, how we dashed past the projecting rock into the moonlight, and how we rode through a quickly scattering party of men.

The horse, a powerful brute, sped onwards. I was too exhausted to check him, but luckily, before reaching a sudden bend in the road, we entered another shadow. He shied at this and dropped into a walk. I experienced one of those sudden inspirations that come to one in moments of danger. As a matter of fact the direct source of this inspiration was a gap cut through the stunted bushes on the left side of the road. I remembered how a companion and myself had descended on to the road through this gap nearly two weeks before out of a track leading up from the Jordan Valley. It would be

difficult to negotiate; it would be a longer distance to cover; there was the slight risk of meeting Turk reinforcements coming from the direction of Amman and Ain Es Sir; but this would be nothing to the risk of bumping into Turks on the main road. Yes, the track was the safest alternative.

I turned our mount up the steep slope. We reached the track, little more than a sheep-path, and broke into a trot. For a short distance we rode parallel to the highway and about fifty feet above it. Then, after passing a cluster of tombs and ash-trees, we turned southwards. The moon went out, and left us in darkness once more. We stumbled onwards, the horse feeling his way along the gap through the mustard fields. The pungent scent of the mustard was blown up to us. An uncanny silence enveloped us, even the horse's hoofs making but a slight noise on the soft ground.

Again the moon shone out. We clattered on to some rocks. The track a few yards ahead disappeared in a sudden descent. I realised our position before the moon was eclipsed once more.

"We must dismount here, mon camarade," I muttered.

A minute later we stood together by the horse on the rock that shut in the northern end of a big deep wadi. Not a sound on the track behind us. Obviously we had given the slip to any possible pursuers. We looked down into what appeared just a long black shadow, darker even than the night itself. A gust of wind blew a few drops of rain into our faces. The barking of dogs, distant but sharp, came from the blackened slopes of Arkub El Khaluf, a massive hill that shut in the western side of the wadi. Against whom was this barking directed, ourselves or Turks . . .?

I began to lead the horse down the descent, and nearly fell over on the slippery surface. There was only one thing to do; so, Turks or no Turks, I handed the reins to Andrea, who kept strangely silent, and proceeded ahead, pointing my torch into the gloom, picking my way behind its light down the zigzag path, cut and worn out of the face of the rocks, and turning it back every yard to illuminate the way for Andrea and the horse. It took us nearly ten minutes to get down that eighty feet of rock, and we both drew sighs of relief when we reached the bottom.

We mounted again and ambled along the ravine, crossing and recrossing the dried-up bed of a brook. Utter silence surrounded us, broken occasionally by a sudden sweep of wind through the valley. The faint glamour of the cloudy sky threw into enormity the outlines of Arkub El Khaluf shutting in the western side, and made the ridge on the eastern side just discernible. But here below all was darkness except for the dancing of the fire-flies in the air around us.

Soon we began to ascend, very slowly, the steep hill at

the southern end of the wadi. We were both too exhausted to creep forward and reconnoitre the shallow valley into which this hill rose. We should have to take the risk. . . . With an unpleasant suddenness we emerged over the brow of the hill into the harsh moonlight.

"Now we're for it," I thought. But we strained our eyes and saw no enemy. We listened hard. Not a sound of human beings.

. . . . . .

I let the horse have a breather, and his head went down to nibble grass under a solitary oak-tree. I shall never forget those few moments. The scene and the sounds associated with them made an indelible impression on my mind, perhaps a more indelible one than any other that I received during those two extraordinary nights; and the peculiar thing is that there was no danger, no crisis, nothing of importance, at least outwardly, to have accounted for it.

And yet I don't know. Looking back, I suppose I *do* see the reason. It was as though in coming out into the moonlight we had temporarily left danger behind us, and the shadows, in which invisible perils lurked, and as though in gazing down at the misty valley and the range of hills on its far side, the high solitude of our position was brought home to us. And this solitude intensified for me the girl's presence—the fact that my arms holding the reins enclosed her, the fact that her head lay back on my left shoulder, easily, trustfully. . . . She must have felt this moment as I did, for she said in a tired whisper—

"It is marvellous."

"What?" I asked foolishly, and yet wanting to make her explain.

"This solitude . . . our being here . . . together."

"Have you forgiven me?" I questioned, bending over her.

"I do not know. I cannot say. I am so tired—so tired. But this solitude——"

"Supposing it lasted for ever, what then?"

"No, mon ami, dreams never last."

My mind went back to Andrea's deed a few hours before. It seemed impossible. . . . I again experienced an unreasonable feeling of revulsion. . . .

The horse crunched away in the grass. The crickets called shrilly, unceasingly to each other. A jackal somewhere down in the valley howled suddenly at the moon. A cold wind swept upon us out of nowhere. It made a restless sound in the oak-tree and brought a harsh sense of reality into the place.

I pulled at the reins. We started down into the valley in a westward direction.

"You must try and go to sleep," I whispered to Andrea.

The moon continued to guide us, and after one rather difficult rocky descent the track, following the gradual downward slope of the valley, was easy to follow. I let the horse

go easily, knowing that we should have to ride for our lives once we reached Shunet Nimrin.

It was about three when we started down the valley. It took us about an hour and a half to amble through it. The farther we went the more unreal everything became. The wadi narrowed down till our pathway curled in and out between small knoll-shaped hillocks, whose sides were carpeted with clumps of flowers that showed their many colours —red, white, violet, and blue —even in the moonlight. The drowsy perfume of the poppies lay over the fairy-like dells through which we passed. Clefts in the hills gave fleeting glimpses of the blue misty mountains of Judæa, falling down on the far side of the Jordan Valley into another dim blue expanse, the Dead Sea. And the girl leaning back asleep on my shoulder, with her jet-black eyebrows and eyelashes, her slightly prominent nose, and the redness of her lips marking the moonlit pallor of her face, even the soft respirations of her body against mine, seemed as unreal as our adventure itself. I was so exhausted. I suppose that was the reason.

But as we turned a sudden bend I realised that we were nearing Shunet Nimrin, and that the crisis of our adventure was at hand. I began to wake up and to curse the moon that had been such a good guide to us up till now.

. . . . . .

We came round the final bend into an offshoot of the Shunet Nimrin basin. At the far end about a hundred and fifty yards distant I could just make out a figure or two on horseback, also a long row of horse-lines. I awoke Andrea.

"We are going to pass through the enemy's lines," I said. "You must bend low over the horse's head in case they fire."

I extracted my revolver from its holster, and put the horse into a trot. He seemed pretty fresh still and started off well. It was as if we were moving up to the starting-point of a race. In this case we had a short enough distance to the starting-point, but a race beyond it of five miles down to the banks of the Jordan. Could we possibly do it? If we penetrated the positions here, should we encounter outposts stationed beyond in the Plain of Moab? If we passed the outposts, should we find our troops on this side of the Jordan? Perhaps they had withdrawn across the river. . . .

Well, I decided to risk the road right across the plain and race the five miles ahead as hard as the horse would go. The nearer we got to the figures at the end of the wadi, the more excited I became. I cannot remember experiencing any trace of fear. I became exhilarated by the sporting chance of our escaping. We had quite a sporting chance— of that I was sure. The element of surprise was on our side.

Down the rocky path we went, gathering speed. I can

swear that I had communicated my excitement to the horse. In another moment we were passing between horse-lines and long rows of grey sleeping figures. In a flash I noticed that the horses were harnessed, the soldiers fully dressed. That meant only one thing. This was the regiment that had clanked above our heads a few hours before. They were taking a short rest, ready to go forward the next morning, ready to—to attack! That was it. And the sentries on horseback dotted all about the entrance to the valley, what did they mean? They were guarding the sleeping columns, so, of course, there was nothing between them and the British lines. Thank God! We couldn't have yet withdrawn across the river!

We were almost up to the first group of horseback sentries, or whatever they were. I urged the horse to a canter. We darted past them before they recognised my uniform. When they did, they set up a tremendous shouting. We headed for the wooden bridge over the Shaib. Crack—crack—crack. God! They were firing at us. The rough bouldered road leapt up in front, shortened slowly, slowly towards the bridge. We must get there—must get there. I prayed and perspired. At last we clattered on to it. Holes appeared in the boards beneath us.... Suddenly the moon disappeared. The firing ceased.

We dropped on to the main road and started down it at a reckless gallop. Our steed was utterly mad now, and I could not have stopped him, even had I wished to. But the sentry-groups farther forward were waiting for us. They were shouting and swinging lanterns ahead on the road. They could not fire at us, however, for fear of shooting their own fellows. I held out my revolver as we charged down on them and aimed at one of the lanterns. Bang!—a smashing of glass—a cry. I was exultant. A pure fluke, of course, but it cleared the way. The other lanterns dropped back right and left. We went through into the valley, into No Man's Land....

There was a tremendous explosion a few yards behind us, and a pinging of lumps of metal round our heads. The flash lit up everything for a second so clearly that I saw the ruts in the soft ashy road, and the stunted bushes astride it. A bomb....

We must have gone another mile before the horse slowed down. Andrea remarked anxiously—

"Are you all right?"

"Absolutely. Are you?"

"Yes."

I breathed a sigh of relief. Our dangers were at last over. I reined in the horse. We ambled slowly along the slightly descending road. A whiteness crept into the sky. Objects began to take form in the half-light. With the coming of dawn I was growing exceedingly drowsy. In fact I should have gone to sleep, had not Andrea suddenly shouted in my ear—

"Look out! They're behind us."

I sat bolt upright in the saddle. I felt unable to tackle this new situation. Looking back, I saw a posse of men on horseback about a hundred yards away. They must have stolen up, taking advantage of the softness of the road. Their movements were uncanny. Instead of firing, their leader waved a white flag at me, whilst he sent men out on either side of the road. I was so sleepy that I could not at first realise the significance of these manœuvres. It was only as the party spread out astride the road that I caught on to their object. They wanted to prevent me taking information of the impending attack to the British lines, but they also wanted to head me off and capture me alive for the information that I might give them.

I dug my heel into the horse's thigh. But he was tired, and refused even to trot.

"Coom on," I coaxed, "coom along."

Then I cursed the poor brute, "Come on, damn you. Come on then." I clicked my tongue, I cursed, I coaxed, I dug my heel into his thigh, I pulled the reins, all to no account. That horse had no liking for British methods. He began whinnying to the horses circling round us on all sides.

Suddenly Andrea, with a little "Ah!" plucked her dagger out of her breast, leant far back, and plunged it half an inch into the horse's left thigh, just where the spurs go. Away we went into a gallop. I saw the other horsemen trying to turn into the road and head us off, and I heard the sound of the rest of the party's horse-hoofs only just behind us.

Luckily for us a lot of dense scrub and bush bordered the road, and only one member of the heading-off parties got on to it. He was a brave enough fellow, for he stood waiting for us. As we came up I fired my revolver. His horse gave a squeal, plunged, and threw him. I remember his figure dangling in the air for a second, and his yell of pain as he descended into some prickly bushes.

Fifty yards farther on the poor old horse snorted and fell into a walk again. He must have felt a bit sore now as well as tired. I looked back to see if we were still being followed, and was amazed to see our pursuers trotting back to their lines. Turks are the most extraordinary people as enemies. Their actions are either extremely chivalrous or extremely cruel. I suppose they thought that we had put up a good fight for our escape, and, on seeing that they could not surround us, fell back without firing a shot, in recognition of the fact.

The sun, a flaming red ball, emerged out of the dark hills behind us and lit up the Judæan hills ahead. We could see their clefts and scars and the vast shadows passing across them. We could see

Jericho, looking deceitfully clean and white amid its verdant trees and cultivated ground. Far to the south lay a vast tranquil stretch of water, into which great buttresses of the Judæan range fell steeply—the Dead Sea.

Sand-hills came into view less than a mile ahead of us. We saw figures walking about on them.

"Hurrah!" I shouted; then added, in explanation to Andrea, "They haven't crossed the river."

As we neared our outpost positions I waved a white handkerchief that I luckily had. I heard somebody shout in a good English voice—

"Right-o! Come along. We won't fire."

A minute later several fellows were running out to meet us. We were soon surrounded by a group of Londoners. It all seemed too good to be true. A subaltern was speaking to me.

"You look pretty done in, old man," he remarked. "Here, have some of this, and let the girl have some. What is she—Armenian? Damned pretty, anyway."

I could not answer him. There come times when danger is over, and one is surrounded by friends, when one is overcome by an intense desire to weep. I made Andrea drink some brandy, and then had a good drink myself.

I recovered my voice, and thanked him tremendously. He began to lead the horse down the road into our lines. As we passed between the rifle-pits we were surrounded by a whole lot of fellows.

"Gor bli' me," I heard one of them say. "Poor bloke, 'e looks done in."

"Wounded in the leg, ain't 'e?"

"Yes. But ain't 'e picked up a peach!"

"Not 'arf."

A few minutes later, after I had communicated to the battalion's commanding officer my information about what I believed to be an impending Turkish attack, I was lying on a stretcher having my wound dressed by the medical officer.

"My ankle's practically all right now," I said as he unrolled my bandage, "and the wound's nothing more than a scratch."

"Don't know about that," he grunted. "Rather septic, anyhow."

A man appeared at the tent door with Andrea.

"The girl you brought in wants to speak to you, sir, before I take her down to the lorry-lines."

"Au revoir, Andrea," I said, repressing emotion in front of the doctor. "Write to me when you reach Cairo. I shall be down there soon. Here's my regimental address."

I handed her a piece of paper with my address on it. She knelt down to take it, and kissed my hand simply.

"Au revoir, mon ami. N'oublie jamais," she said.

"Take care of yourself, little one. Au revoir."

Then she had gone.

Leave-takings are foolish

things. This one was a most unromantic finish to our adventure. I felt sad that I had not shown the girl any emotion at our parting. But I cheered up enormously at the thought that we were certain to meet again in Egypt within a few weeks.

. . . . . .

II.

But it was a long time before I saw Andrea again. At least it seemed so to me, though it can hardly have been more than eight months. My wound healed quickly, and I never got farther down the line than El Arish. After leaving hospital I was put on to a variety of jobs, owing to my knowledge of French and Arabic, and finished up as a liaison officer in the final advance into Syria.

At first Andrea and I corresponded frequently. I still have her letters, written in a pretty, round, French hand, lying in a drawer in my desk. I carried them about with me wherever I went. Absence began to make me more infatuated than ever. A hundred times I lived again through those days and nights we had spent together in the hills of Moab. At evening when the crickets called I was thrilled by a sudden deep remembrance of our companionship. . . .

In late August, however, I came in for such a flood of work prior to the advance that even thoughts of Andrea were swept temporarily from my mind. But there was one letter that I had to answer. It was written from a sort of colony that had been set up for the Armenian refugees near Cairo, and ran:—

"My dear Comrade,—I am beginning to feel very sad here, like a bird imprisoned. I want the hills again and the desert, all the wild exciting things that never come to me here. There are so many women and children around me, and all the time they talk of their illnesses and other petty affairs. Oh! how I hate them all! Mon Dieu, how I hate them!

"I want the open spaces again, and the crickets at night, and the little streams that never stop running.

"When will you get leave? Will you come and see your little comrade? Only for a few hours. It is all I ask.

"Andrea."

This letter had a tremendous effect upon me. Up to the time of receiving it I had tried hard to deceive myself into a belief that I held no deep love for Andrea,—a passion that would pass, just a romantic interlude in our two lives, an interlude that must be left untouched. Marriage would make it prosaic. I had imagined the impossibility of our life in London, her unhappiness with my

friends, and, I must admit it, an ultimate mutual delusion in each other.

Suddenly, however, revelation had come to me. I was whirled up in a stream of emotions. This, I suppose, was love, or whatever one likes to call it. I sat down in my tent and wrote her a long letter swearing I would get leave as soon as I could, that I would come and release her, that we would go away into the desert, anywhere, if she wished it, and continue our comradeship for ever. I wrote on and on into the night. I have never written a letter like that before or since. I posted it next morning, drew a sigh of relief, and plunged again into my work.

. . . . . .

The advance was over. The Armistice had been signed. I sat in the leave train as it sped towards Cairo through a land of sunshine, palm-trees, fantastic mud villages, and huge stretches of cotton and corn. But when the two high minarets of the citadel came into sight and the dome of the mosque of Mohamet Ali, a feeling of fear leapt up in my heart. I had not written to Andrea for two months. Her letters had stopped coming six weeks ago. Then a week ago I had written again, but had received no reply. I had put this down to a delay in the post, but now, as the train slowed down and brought me to the city whither she had gone so many months before, I experienced a peculiar excitement and dread.

Ten minutes later my companion—an Engineer subaltern—and myself were driving through the streets of the great city. The "gharri" was filled up with luggage. The subaltern was slapping me on the shoulder and kicking his legs on his valise, telling me that he was going to have the time of his life for the next seven days.

"There's a ripping little V.A.D. I know down here, old chap. By Jove! it will be good to see a girl after all this time. Repair to the bar on arrival? What do you say? Must have a drink together to celebrate everything! What?"

He rattled on. I let him do so, answering a question every now and then, but as the "gharri" rumbled along with a ringing of bells and constant cries from the driver of "Owar riglak," I kept my eyes on the multicoloured crowd, wondering foolishly if I might obtain a glance at the face which I so much wished to see. . . .

The subaltern and I ate a hurried tea in the lounge at Shepheard's Hotel, where we had booked rooms. He wanted to go off and meet his V.A.D. I wanted to get to the hostel for Armenian refugees out at Heliopolis.

Of my subsequent wandering that evening I will say little. I took a tram to Luna Park and searched all over Heliopolis before I discovered the hostel. At last I found myself talking to the porter in a sort of lodge, my heart thumping with excitement.

"No, she has gone," he was

replying to my question. "She has gone. She left here a month ago. She—what you call it?—ran away. We have not yet found her."

I cannot remember much of my journey back to Cairo. I got into a passing "gharri" and sat back in it, dazed and bewildered, utterly crestfallen. As to where Andrea had gone, as to what course to pursue in searching for her, I was quite unable to bring my mind to think.

My subaltern acquaintance saw me come into the lounge of the hotel.

"You look dicky, old chap," he remarked in a tone of surprise. "What you need is a drink, and a damned strong one too."

"I think I do," I replied, and I went with him to the bar.

. . . . . .

Late the next evening I alighted from the train at Helouan. Helouan lies in the desert, nearly twenty miles south of Cairo, a pleasant, Italian-looking health resort, that smiles at the frown of the Mokattam Hills, under which it has grown up.

I had spent the whole of the day in fruitless searches for Andrea. At last I had realised that I should never find her in Cairo. It was like looking for a needle in a haystack. In a mood of desperation I had decided to spend the rest of my leave anywhere away from the bustle of Cairo, anywhere that might give me quiet and time to collect my thoughts.

After dinner that evening I went and sat in a little arbour in the rose-garden in front of the Tewfik Palace Hotel. It was a beautiful night, and the blue starlit sky filled in the tracery of the rose branches above me. I was sitting quietly, smoking a pipe, when that voice—the same musical voice that had spoken to me out of the darkness at Es Salt—began talking to me.

"Mon ami," it faltered on the long seat beside me.

"Andrea," I gasped, the pipe falling from my month in my astonishment.

"It is I."

She turned her face upwards. A pattern of light and shadows fell upon it. She wore a little hat and was now dressed in European fashion. But the deep brown eyes, the well-shaped nose, and the little red quivering mouth were just the same.

In another second I seized her in my arms, kissed her, and held her.

"I shall never let you go again," I muttered; and though she attempted to get away, I pressed her all the closer, mad as I was with this sudden relief, excitement of meeting, passion, the moonlight.

With an effort she pushed me away, sat bolt upright on the wooden seat, and said simply—

"I'm married."

"Yes, I'm married," she continued, seeing, I suppose, the blank surprise in my face. "I thought—I thought you had forgotten me. I had no letter

for three months. Then I grew desperate, mad," her voice became broken, "and this man," she went on fiercely, as though striving to overcome her tears, "this man offered me freedom, a chance of going to my country again—and—and I took it."

I sat like a rock. I felt as if I could not move my limbs. I simply looked at her, listening between her gasped-out sentences to that creaking of crickets around the arbour that had become so familiar to me. It echoed into my brain. I began to realise its ironical significance.

"Yes, he has plenty of money. He is very kind—in his way. He made his money out of selling brassware in the Mooski at Cairo. Now we are returning to Erzerum."

She had grown quite calm again, when suddenly she broke into a little hysterical laugh.

"Oh! he is a funny little man. He talks like a little yapping dog," and she imitated him in such a lively way that we both sat and laughed for a minute. Why is it that humour always creeps into the midst of tragedy . . .?

"And now he is playing the —what you call it?—billiards with a friend. I came out here because I saw you go through the lounge. I knew I could never see you again. We go away in an hour to Cairo, then we sail to-morrow for Smyrna."

For a moment I couldn't speak. When I got my voice I found myself talking and doing things artificially, like an actor in a play. I took Andrea's letter, to which I had written such an impassioned reply two months before, from my pocket.

"Do you remember this?" I said, handing it to her. "I always keep it in my pocket. It is the most wonderful letter I have ever had."

She looked at it. There were little crimply sounds as the tears dropped down on it.

"You never replied to it," she said.

"Of course I replied to it," I answered. "I wrote you a long, long letter. I asked you to come away with me for ever, anywhere, to continue our comradeship for ever."

I suppose it was cruel to have said this, but it was necessary. I had to find out whether she had received it. "And I wrote you two letters about a week ago," I added, looking away from her.

"They never reached me," she sobbed. "They never reached me. Oh! it is all a mistake."

Her little arms were round my neck and her face was buried in my tunic. Her body quivered against mine. The sound of her sobbing mingled with the crying of the crickets and vague snatches of distant music played by the orchestra in the lounge of the hotel.

A little yapping voice called out, "Andrea," somewhere in the garden.

The girl's head looked up.

"It is he," she said.

I bent down and kissed her on the mouth, and it seemed to me that in that kiss I was

clinging desperately to a beautiful dream out of which I was about to pass into the cold world of reality.

"Andrea," the voice called again.

"You must go, little comrade," I said with a trembling voice. "Be brave for my sake."

I raised her to her feet and stood up beside her.

"You will be the queen of beauty in Erzerum. You will be happy. Time heals all wounds, little comrade."

My voice was choking and I was uttering foolish platitudes.

"You will think of me sometimes?" she whispered.

"Always."

I felt a sudden swift kiss on my lips.

"And I shall think of you always, always."

In the musical voice there was a note of impassioned, desperate finality. It was the end.

I dared not look at her again. I remember gazing down at the dim gravel floor of the arbour, listening to the sounds of her feet taking her away from me for ever. . . .

How long I remained in the arbour sitting on the seat I cannot remember. All around me was the crying of the crickets. Then the sudden whistle of the departing train, a puffing, a clanking of metal on metal that gradually faded to nothingness. Once more only the crying of the crickets that closed in my solitude.

AVE ATQUE VALE.

BY J. A. STRAHAN.

THE late Lord Morris, being asked by some one why Ireland was constantly discontented, replied that it was due to the attempt of a slow-witted people to govern a quick-witted people. Of the slowness of English wits where Irish affairs are concerned there can be no question: witness the fact that the only thing Englishmen will not believe about Ireland is the truth. As to the quickness of Irish wits, however, some observers may have doubt. To take only one instance out of hundreds of late: the recent Jim Larkin strike in Dublin does not to the ordinary mind suggest lightning rapidity of thought.

Jim Larkin is supposed to be an Irishman: some people used to say he is the son of another Jim—Jim Carey, the base Invincible, and the baser betrayer of the Invincibles; but all that is certainly known of Jim is that he came to Ireland from England and engineered a strike of the transport workers in Dublin, the motto of which was, "Damn the trade of Dublin." After doing his best to carry out this patriotic object and create chaos in Ireland, he went to America. There he devoted his eloquence and energy to the benefit of America on the same lines. The Americans, being as slow-witted as the English, could not grasp the advantages of his agitation and promptly sent him to jail; and thereupon the Dublin Transport Union—which is now the Bolshevist branch of the Sinn Fein League—called a strike in Dublin to compel his release in America. After the late Mr Justice Hawkins had passed severe sentences on a number of international Anarchists, some of their comrades in crime determined to wreak vengeance upon him by blowing up his house. By a blunder they blew up that of his neighbour, Mr Reginald Brett. The next morning after the explosion the learned Judge, in company with its owner, viewed the ruined mansion. As he left, the learned Judge observed with great firmness: "Well, Brett, if the Anarchists think they can frighten me from doing my duty by blowing up you, they'll find they are mistaken." Perhaps by this time it has occurred to the Irish Transport Unionists that they were mistaken when they thought they could frighten Washington by doing damage to Dublin. If Irish wits were as quick as they are supposed to be, it would hardly have been necessary to demonstrate the truth of this by experiment.

This action of the Irish Trades Unionists was scarcely more silly, however, than that of the English Trades Union-

ists — the Carpenters' and Joiners' Society. Some time ago, as the world has been very fully informed, the loyal workers in the shipbuilding yards and engineering shops of Belfast, being exasperated by the continuous murders of loyalists in the South, and especially of their fellow-Ulsterman, Colonel Smyth, whose brother, Major Smyth, D.S.O., has since been assassinated, resolved to work no longer side by side with men who sympathised with such crimes. Accordingly they insisted that every worker should either forswear sympathy with murder and treason or leave the yards and shops. About ten per cent of the workers refused to do this, and were expelled. The expelled workmen complained to the said Society that they were being driven from their work because, as they gently expressed it, of their political opinions. The Society was shocked at this enormity and determined to put an end to it. It called on the loyalist workers who were members of the Society to come out of the yards and shops until the disloyal workers were brought in again — in other words, it ordered the men who had expelled the Sinn Feiners to strike as a protest against their own act. As a modicum of intelligence might have taught it to anticipate, the loyal workmen did not come out of the works, but very probably they will shortly come out of the Society.

No doubt such an imbecility as this could never have been perpetrated but for the fact that the officials of the Society, like true-born Englishmen, would believe anything about Ireland except the truth. If they read the newspapers they must have known that the action against the Sinn Feiners began in the works of Messrs Harland & Wolff; and every one knows that the head of that great firm is Lord Pirrie, and that his lordship is an ardent Nationalist—the one solitary Nationalist employer of any importance in Ulster. Nevertheless, when the Sinn Feiners told them that the employers were at the bottom of the trouble, they believed, and acting on the belief that a lie was the truth, they made themselves ridiculous.

In this they were no worse than the bulk of English politicians and pressmen. Who does not remember, when the third—or was it the fourth?—Home Rule Bill was before Parliament, how the declaration of Ulstermen that they would fight rather than submit to a Dublin Parliament was received? Who does not remember the jokes about Ulsteria, and the signing of the Convention in blood, and the drilling with wooden rifles? The notion that the Ulster Scots would risk their little finger to resist being put under the rule of people whom they regarded as traitors, struck these jokers as no less absurd than that they should resent being deprived of their birthright as full citizens of the United Kingdom—as full citizens as the men of Middle-

sex or Mid-Lothian. While the politicians and pressmen laughed the Ulstermen drilled, and before the Bill came up for final reading the jokers found themselves faced with a disciplined army tens of thousands strong with real rifles—an army which did not shoot solitary policemen and soldiers from behind hedges, but which was prepared to meet in the field any other army which attempted to drive them under a hated yoke. Then when coercion of Ulster had become impossible, the jokers declared it to be unthinkable. The Nationalists had told them that the Covenant was mere bluster; and this being a lie, they believed it and made themselves ridiculous.

Conversely, when the Ulstermen declared that the one force behind the Nationalist movement was hatred of, and the one object of the Nationalist movement was separation from, England, this being the truth, they did not believe it. They relied on the protestations of the clever Nationalists in Parliament, who, no doubt, sometimes were voicing their own feelings and aims. But the Ulsterman paid no attention to these protestations. He relied on what he heard on the farms, about the factories, and in the public-houses. There, whatever there might be in Parliament, there was no pretence: the Nationalist workers talked plainly to the Unionist workers, and left them in no doubt that their one object was to drive out of Ireland not merely English domination but everything which savoured of that detested rule; and that the only difference among them was whether they should attempt to attain the whole object at one blow by open rebellion, or whether they should take the safer if slower way of attaining it bit by bit through Parliamentary action—by what they called instalments of justice. When the Liberals came into office the bulk of the Irish Nationalists were in favour of proceeding by the slower and constitutional way: under Unionist rule the quicker or seditious road had become most disagreeable. But with the advent of the Liberals the trend among them was steadily to sedition. Before the world-war broke out all the vital force behind the Nationalist party was for rebellion. After the world-war broke out the vital force became the only force behind the party. Every farm labourer and mill hand of the Catholic persuasion—and it must never be forgotten that these and their parish priests and Catholic curates are and have for years been the dictators of Nationalist policy in Ireland—were repeating that foolish saying of O'Connell's, that England's difficulty was Ireland's opportunity. The only question among them was when should the armed rebellion take place? And this was the occasion which the sagacious and far-sighted Sir Edward (now Viscount) Grey seized for declaring that in the whole dark

prospect then before England the only bright spot was Ireland. When the Ulsterman read this amazing statement, he marvelled whether after all government by traitors could be much worse than government by fools. Before long, and while the Liberal papers in England were still enthusiastically announcing the loyalty of the Irish Nationalists and the wickedness of the Ulstermen, rebellion broke out in Dublin and the South; unarmed policemen and soldiers were shot like dogs in the streets and country lanes, and a republic in alliance with Germany was proclaimed. And Englishmen, having refused to believe the Ulstermen's declaration because it was true, had once more made themselves ridiculous.

But after all, Ulstermen are friends of England and the Empire, and so it might be argued that—at any rate among the new Englishmen, who dislike England and detest the Empire—they are reasonably "suspect." It is only natural, therefore, that any statements they may make should be disbelieved. But now the Nationalists themselves have come forward to confirm those statements. Throwing over all professions of loyalty to the King and all talk of Home Rule, they announce that their one and only object is complete separation. For the first time they are telling the truth, and for the first time they are not believed; the Englishman, in spite of all they can say, is convinced that they are murdering policemen and soldiers, and destroying property right and left, not to get the separation they themselves declare they want, but in order that they may manage their local affairs with the same skill and honesty as have rendered Dublin, Sligo, and half the southern towns practically bankrupt. Once more the Englishman will believe anything about Ireland except the truth.

The Ulstermen would not care much what the Englishman believed about the Celtic Irishman if he let them alone: that is all *they* want, to be left to enjoy the position to which they were born, full and free citizenship of the United Kingdom. But in spite of the Liberal leaders' declaration, that the coercion of Ulster to drive it out of the United Kingdom is unthinkable, they see that both leaders and followers are once more thinking about it. Their only difficulty is as to how that coercion can be brought about. In the present state of things, with the army and police in Ireland in a state of furious hostility against the Nationalists, it would be madness to ask them to shoot down their friends unless these would submit to their enemies. So they are compelled to seek other forces for coercion. And they are finding them—slander and abandonment.

Slander is the preliminary stage. For nearly three years now the life of a soldier and policeman in southern Ireland

has been one of terror. Since the beginning of this year nearly two hundred of them have been murdered. Yet one looks over the Liberal and Labour newspapers, and the Labour and Liberal speeches, and finds that all they have to say of these assassinations is that the murderers must be given all that they desire. Then when these assassinations are carried into the very heart of Ulster, when a blameless police officer, coming home from church in Lisburn, the birthplace of the hero of the Indian Mutiny, John Nicholson, is shot down in the street, the Ulstermen lose their self-control and proceed to make reprisals on the sympathisers with the assassins, immediately the Liberal and Labour politicians and pressmen are horrified. A scream goes up which rends the firmament if it does not reach heaven. A pogrom, a pogrom against Catholics, that is the only name by which these gentlemen can adequately describe this foolish outburst of righteous fury.

No sensible person can, and no sensible Ulsterman has attempted to, justify that outburst. But lawyers, and Mr Asquith is one, know that there are two defences to a charge of crime. One is justification, that the defendant did only what he was entitled to do. The other is excuse, that the defendant was not entitled to do what he did, but that the circumstances were such as to render him guiltless for what he had done. If ever there was a case where a defendant people could plead excuse for a crime, surely it is the case of the people of Lisburn. These people, unlike the bulk of the inhabitants of County Antrim, are not of Scottish, but of almost pure English descent. They have always been loyal to England, even in 1798, when most of their Scots neighbours were very much the reverse. The Irish among them are immigrants from the south, and as alien as the Irish colonies are in Lancashire or Lanark. These people, proud of their ancient lineage and allegiance, found those aliens murdering in their midst men whose only crime was loyalty. If the Irish of Glasgow or Liverpool began to assassinate the chiefs of the police because they were Scotsmen or Englishmen and loyal to the Empire, what do you think would happen to those colonies? What would happen in America we already know. It is not so many years since a gang of Italian assassins began to shoot police officers in New Orleans, and the result was a massacre of the Italian colony there, to which the outbreak in Lisburn was child's-play. Nobody justified that—except perhaps a few ultra-American newspaper men—and nobody justifies the fury of the Lisburn people; but as long as human nature is human nature such outbursts under unbearable provocation will occur, and will be by sane men never justified, but always excused.

But with the new Englishman murdering men loyal to England is war, while wrecking the houses of men who are disloyal is a pogrom.

But this slandering of the Ulsterman is merely, as I have said, a preliminary step to prepare the average Englishman for the abandonment of Ulster to his and her enemies. Viscount Grey, with the courage of ignorance, has already declared for abandonment. His ground for advocating such a course is that English government in Ireland has failed. There he is right. He is good enough to add that "even" the present Government is not solely responsible for this failure. There again he is right. The Government which was solely responsible for the failure was the Government of which he was a member. When the Conservatives were defeated and the Liberals came into office, Ireland and Europe were in a condition of profound peace. Sir Edward Grey was given charge of European affairs, and Mr Birrell was given charge of Irish affairs, and both gentlemen set out to improve the peace. Sir Edward's efforts landed Europe in the most terrific war the world has ever seen. Mr Birrell's efforts provoked two rebellions in Ireland—a rebellion of the loyalists against being extruded from the United Kingdom, and a rebellion of the disloyalists against being included in it—surely a record in mismanagement. Mr Birrell has withdrawn from any pretence to statesmanship; but the bigger bungler is still regarded by some as a statesman.

This prescient person, who at the outbreak of the war saw in all England's black horizon only one star of hope, which, strange to say, was Ireland, then on the brink of rebellion, has now come forward to display further foresight on Irish affairs. He now prophesies that so long as English government is maintained in Ireland, North and South there will never agree. This wise prophecy might be extended: even after English government has been withdrawn they will not agree. What is to happen if they do not? His lordship says Ulster is strong enough to get her own terms. What does he mean by strong enough? If it is strong enough by noses —which is his party's way of counting strength—then Ulster is only one to four; so it is clear Ulster is not strong enough that way. If he means by fighting, Ulster is strong enough to get her own terms that way,—of that no Ulsterman has any doubt: her terms will be the independence of Ulster. Apparently, then, Lord Grey's efforts for the pacification of Ireland are like his efforts to improve the peace of Europe—to end in war.

But Lord Grey's abandonment of Ireland to the gunmen is not to be absolute. They may do what they like or what they can with Ulster; but he will not trust them so far as England is concerned.

They must have no army and no navy. How he is going to prevent them having either or both after the English soldiers are withdrawn and the Irish police disbanded he does not explain. Would it not be wise to dissolve and disarm the Republican forces which now possess every weapon from revolvers to machine-guns before the English soldiers leave and the Irish police are discharged? I wish him success in the job, for if it succeeds there will be no need to abandon Ireland.

For let there be no mistake about it, the abandonment of English government in Ireland is, in the very showing of those who advocate it, a capitulation to the gun men. They advocate the abandonment because, they say, English government has become impossible. But who has made it impossible? When the "black and tans," or the soldiers, exasperated beyond endurance by the murder of their comrades, indulge in reprisals, these advocates of abandonment are horrified by such "hellish" behaviour. The poor people ruined by the reprisals, they contend, have nothing to do with the murders. If so, they have nothing to do with making English government impossible, and so England is being asked to capitulate to the assassins of her soldiers and policemen, and to nobody else.

Not only is she going to capitulate to them herself, but she is, according to statesmen like Lord Grey, to abandon all the rest of the people of Ireland to them. It is to that that Ulster will never consent. If England chooses to withdraw from Ireland, Ulster cannot prevent it. She is willing, nay, anxious to remain an integral part of not merely the British Empire but of the United Kingdom, to the full citizenship of which every son of hers was born. But if England finds her a burden and her allegiance an encumbrance, then all she asks is the right to go her own way and to determine her own destiny. The Bill now before Parliament she does not love; but, at any rate, with all its faults it will give her this. Therefore to avoid a worse fate she is willing to accept it. No longer wanted as a sister, she will make and rule her own home and always remain a friend. To England she says, *Ave atque vale!*

THE OLD SERAGLIO.

BY COMMANDER H. C. LUKE, R.N.V.R.

In 1853, exactly four hundred years after the capture of Constantinople by Mohammed the Conqueror, Sultan 'Abdu'l Mejid Khan, a victim of the bad taste that was spreading from Mid-Victorian England and the France of the Second Empire over all Europe and the Near East, left the Old Seraglio, the home of his forefathers, and established the Imperial residence in his Palace of Dolma Baghché, on the shore of the Bosphorus. For his abandonment of what was venerable and supremely beautiful in favour of what was new, banal, and vulgar, the Sultan must not be blamed too severely; he was merely following in the footsteps of the Occidentals of his time, who for a generation or two did their best to make and keep the world hideous.

'Abdu'l Mejid then went to Dolma Baghché, 'Abdu'l Aziz, his successor, built Chiragan and Beylerbey; 'Abdu'l Hamid II., fearful lest the Bosphorus Palaces should prove too tempting a mark for the guns of mutinous ships, retired to Yildiz Kiosk, which has also housed his successors. That treasury of Ottoman art, the Old Seraglio, remains neglected of its masters save on the one day in the year when the Padishah proceeds thither to venerate the relics of the Prophet. The ceremony over, it relapses into its accustomed seclusion, only disturbed at rare intervals by privileged visitors. Once sheltering a population of thousands, the Seraglio now houses a score or so of servants and a few Palace Secretaries (gentlemen of the *anderun*, or interior, they are called in the Persian phraseology affected at Court); occasionally a eunuch flits noiselessly about the empty Haremlik, dim echo of a past that now seems strangely remote.

The Seraglio occupies the easternmost of Constantinople's seven hills, a promontory washed by the Sea of Marmora, the Bosphorus, and the Golden Horn; and on its incomparable site once rose the original Acropolis of ancient Byzantium. Now it is enclosed by battlemented walls, within which are scattered, without method, and according to the whim of successive Grand Signors, many buildings of divers sizes, purposes, and shapes—masterpieces, most of them, of eastern architecture and eastern decoration. These, collectively, form that mysterious and jealously-guarded retreat, that Turkish Kremlin, whence for precisely four centuries the Ottoman world was ruled.

It is not, perhaps, quite accurate to suggest that the Seraglio is nothing but a confused medley of inconsequent and disconnected kiosks. A

considerable part consists of courts or quadrangles as regular as those of an Oxford college; it is only as one approaches the *arcana* of the palace that symmetry begins to make way for a more picturesque variety. The Seraglio, in its wider sense, begins with the Outer Court, which is entered from the precincts of St Sophia by the Bab-i-Humayun, "the Illustrious Gate." This court contains the well-preserved Byzantine church of St Irene, now the Turkish Military Museum, and, beyond it, the dilapidated buildings of the Mint. Below the Mint, on the western declivity of the hill, are housed the imperial collections of antiquities, partly in the Chinili Kiosk ("the tiled Pavilion"), which dates in its present form from the last years of the sixteenth century, partly in modern galleries. In the middle of the court the celebrated plane-tree of the janissaries, around which that turbulent corps was wont to demonstrate its sentiments of loyalty, or, more often, the reverse, still maintains its existence of extreme and enfeebled old age. From the outer court, which is open to the public, the Orta Qapu, or Middle Gate, leads into the Seraglio proper, only accessible to those provided with permits from Yildiz Kiosk.

The eastern side of the spacious quadrangle now entered is wholly occupied by the imperial kitchens, whose row of nine little domes, very conspicuous to ships rounding Seraglio Point, has led irreverent naval officers to speak of the sultan's raising steam for a nine-course dinner. Facing the kitchens is a gallery, now somewhat decayed, under which the janissaries paraded on ceremonial occasions: in the north-west corner, at the foot of the main tower of the Seraglio, stands the Hall of the Divan, or Council Chamber. Here in former times the Grand Vizier presided on certain days of the week at a court of justice open to all suitors. On other days the Hall was used for the meetings of the Divan, or Council, conducted, no doubt, with a due sense of responsibility on the part of the councillors; for high above their bench, and entered from the Haremlik, is an iron grille or cage, in which the Padishah could overhear unseen his Ministers' deliberations.

A gate with a mighty overhanging roof now leads into the more secluded part of the Seraglio. Though bearing the significant name of Bab-i-Sa'adet, the Gate of Felicity, it does not open immediately into the women's apartments. It gives access, however, to the group of buildings where the sultans lived their official lives, and it was guarded by the corps of white eunuchs. The court to which it is the entrance is less regular than the two through which we have passed; we approach the portion of the Seraglio where the individual fancy of the monarch rather than a regard for symmetry has dictated the style and the emplacement of its component parts. Immediately before us as we pass

through the gate is the throne-room, a detached building half filled by an immense square divan surmounted by a canopy. In a corner of this formidable affair, which resembles an overgrown four-poster bed, the Grand Signors reclined when receiving the ambassadors of foreign Powers. It was rather a humiliating performance for the ambassadors. Before being admitted to the Presence they proceeded to the Hall of the Divan, and, under the supervision of the Grand Vizier, were fed and decked with fur-lined robes. Thus prepared, they were led to the throne-room, where, standing at a respectful distance, and firmly held under each arm by a palace attendant, lest they should seek to harm the august potentate, they read their letters of credence, to which the Sultan replied with an inclination of the head. Then, still clad in their furs, they rejoined their suite without, and were conducted back to their embassies in solemn procession, meeting, indeed, with more respectful treatment outside the palace than inside it. It may here be recalled that until comparatively modern times it was the custom of the sultans to imprison in the dungeon of the Seven Towers the diplomatic representatives of powers at war with Turkey; and we read that during the reign of Mohammed IV. (1648-87) a French ambassador was called a Jew by the Grand Vizier and beaten with a stool, the dragoman of the Imperial internuncio frequently bastinadoed, and a Russian envoy actually kicked out of the presence-chamber.

The French artist Van Mour, *Peintre ordinaire du Roi en Levant*, who between the end of the seventeenth and the middle of the eighteenth centuries was attached to the households of five successive French ambassadors to the Porte, has left us a faithful record of these ceremonies, which remained unchanged in form until the reign of Sultan Mahmud II., that ruthless iconoclast of Turkish traditions. We see, in the collection of Van Mour's pictures preserved in Amsterdam, the ambassador, who has dismounted at the Orta Qapu, entering the second court, preceded by the palace officials with their staves of office, while under the gallery to the left the janissaries swarm like bees around the cauldrons of pilav to which they have been treated. We see the ambassador and his staff being banqueted by the Grand Vizier before the audience, each guest enveloped in his robe of fur. Lastly, at the audience itself, we see the ambassador inclining before the Sultan remote and aloof on his enormous throne.

One quaint conceit of the throne-room has still to be mentioned. It is a tap of water and small marble basin let into the wall beside the throne—its purpose, that the sound of the running water should prevent eavesdroppers from overhearing conversations within the audience-chamber.

In the middle of this third court, which we entered by the Gate of Felicity, stands

another detached building, the Sultan's Library. Its single chamber is lined with cases packed with oriental manuscripts; a handsome Saracenic glass-lamp hangs from the dome, and the walls are adorned with Qoranic texts, written in several cases by the sultans themselves. It must be remembered that in former days in Turkey, and in the Moslem East in general, caligraphy formed an essential accomplishment of every well-educated person. Even the Imperial princes were not exempted from the study of the art, and could probably turn out almost as good a *yafté* as a professional illuminator of texts. Another curiosity of the library is an old English musical clock, probably the gift of an English king to an eighteenth-century sultan. In the face of this clock is an ingenious arrangement of ships travelling up and down billowy waves whenever the clock plays its tunes; and one can imagine how this contrivance must have delighted the toy-loving Orientals of those days.

In a gallery, which forms the eastern boundary of the court, is housed the Imperial collection of china, well arranged in two long rooms. From the fourteenth century onwards, fine specimens of every variety of Chinese porcelain found their way from Pekin to the Turkish court; and the collection, happily preserved through many vicissitudes, thus affords a remarkable synopsis of Chinese ceramic art. During the Dardanelles campaign the collection was removed to Konia for safe custody, but has now returned without mishap to its home in the Seraglio. The corresponding gallery on the western side is the Sultan's Treasury. It is now closed, and the treasure, if still intact, stored out of sight; but the writer well remembers, on his first visit to Constantinople in 1904, the amazement with which he beheld its splendours almost barbaric. Thrones encrusted with rubies and pearls, the State robes of a score of sultans stiff with gems and gold, diamond aigrettes, daggers, and scimitars jewelled with uncut emeralds of fantastic size, sceptres and maces, an enormous basin of porphyry heaped high with golden ducats,—these, and much more, told of centuries of victorious campaigns in lands of fabled riches.

A small double door of iron, heavily bolted, leads from behind the Treasury into the Haremlik itself. Though much has been written about this mysterious fastness, few strangers have penetrated behind its iron doors, and descriptions have generally been as misleading as they have been fanciful. Until about ten years ago, when the last of the old ladies of the Seraglio were transferred to the Bosphorus Palaces, no profane eye had seen the real Haremlik; and the number of persons who since then have been allowed to wander through its now deserted rooms is small. The conventional accounts of the Haremlik speak of stately

marble halls, of lofty and luxurious rooms filled with all the riches of the East, of kiosks and fountains of plashing water, of all the appurtenances of the Arabian Nights. The reality is very different from this, and very much more interesting. Far from being a succession of vast and symmetrical apartments, the Haremlik is a veritable rabbit-warren—a jumble of small courts, corridors, narrow staircases, and innumerable tiny rooms. The upper stories, overlooking the Seraglio gardens, are built of wood, and the walls of the rooms, too, are decorated with rococo woodwork panelling. The lower floors are of more solid construction. The stone walls are enormously thick, and the rooms lined with the most delightful of Persian and Kutahia tiles, the designs differing in every room. It is these tiles which are the most typical and pleasing feature of the Haremlik; they give to it an old-world Eastern atmosphere far truer than the pseudo-orientalism suggested by pictures of gauze-clad odalisques eating sweetmeats on cushioned divans. Of furniture there is little left, and what remains is for the most part Louis XV. A few good specimens of the old Scutari velvets and Brussa brocades have been preserved, and cover sofas evidently made in France. The smallness of the rooms is a constant source of surprise. Even the sultan's famous Turkish bath, where Selim the Sot slipped and broke his skull when over-full of Cyprus wine, is no larger than the baths to be found in many a Turkish private house. The only really spacious room is the audience-chamber of the Haremlik, where at Bairam and on other great festivals the sultans received the ladies of the palace. At one end of the hall is a throne for the sultan, and above the throne a musicians' gallery. The room is surmounted by a lofty dome, and the walls are beautifully tiled. Close by are the school-rooms of the little princes and princesses, also tiled, but otherwise now bare of furniture and decoration.

Here, too, is a semi-detached two-storied building, outwardly of great beauty but of sinister memories. It has a widely overhanging roof, no windows on the ground floor, and only a few, which are heavily barred, on the upper floor. The outside of this building is faced with mellow Kutahia tiles from the ground to the overhanging roof, and externally it is perhaps the loveliest, as it is probably the least-known part of the Haremlik. For this delight to the eye bears a forbidding name, the *Qafes*, which means "the cage," and even now the interior is inaccessible. Here, in this gilded cage, the heirs-apparent to the throne of Turkey were immured with the palace girls and pages set apart for their service, in all other respects rigidly secluded from contact with the world until released by the sultan's death. They then emerged, blinking, as it were, at the daylight and utterly ignorant of affairs; and from the seclusion of a narrow prison

were abruptly transferred to the supreme power over a vast Empire. This vicious system persisted even to the present century. From his birth in 1844 to the year 1909, when he succeeded his brother 'Abdu'l Hamid, the late Sultan Reshad had lived in the strict confinement of his palace, to all intents and purposes a prisoner till, at the age of sixty-four, he ascended the throne of 'Osman.

Vying in beauty and interest with the *Qafes* is the portion of the Haremlik which was formerly the official residence of the Chief of the Black Eunuchs. Until the beginning of the nineteenth century, when Sultan Mahmud II., in the course of his reforms, swept away what was left of medieval Turkey, the Qizlar Aghasi (Master of the Girls) was one of the highest dignitaries of the Empire. He ranked next, in fact, to the Grand Vizier, was a pasha of three tails, and as his appanage administered the imperial mosques and the holy cities Mecca and Medina. His official dress, before Mahmud replaced turbans and flowing robes with fez and Stambuli frock-coat, was a white gown trimmed with sable, and a white cylindrical head-dress more than two feet high. His former quarters comprise a wing of the Haremlik near the Seraglio tower, consisting of four smallish rooms, two on the ground floor, and two up a short flight of steps. Here, again, tiles are the predominant feature, covering the walls and floors of rooms and passages; in the dining-room, not only the walls but also the ceiling are a harmony of olive green and turquoise blue, masterpieces of the craftsmen of Kutahia and Nicæa.

We will now leave the Haremlik for the northernmost part of the palace, for that lofty plateau, dotted with sumptuous kiosks, which overlooks Seraglio Point. Here is the Khirqa-i-Sherif Odasi, a mosque-like pavilion faced with slabs of porphyry, where are preserved the relics of the Prophet, whose possession constitutes one of the Sultan's titles to the Khalifate. A terrace of gleaming marble, the setting for one of those delightful formal eastern ponds, connects the Khirqa-i-Sherif Odasi with the Baghdad Kiosk, which commemorates the capture of Baghdad by Sultan Murad IV. in 1638. It is probably no exaggeration to say that the Baghdad Kiosk represents the high-water mark of later Ottoman art. In Aqshehir, in Sivas, and, above all, in Konia are the architectural *chefs d'œuvre* of the Seljuq Turks, in Brussa those of the earlier Ottomans. This delicate little masterpiece on the heights of Stambul seems to have been the swan-song of Turkish builders and decorators before the decadence set in and infected East and West alike. The interior, with its perfect proportions and exquisite decoration, is a harmonious blend of tiles, rare fabrics, and woodwork inlaid with ivory and tortoise-shell. Lovely within and without, the Baghdad Kiosk is a fragment of that gorgeous East

which is more often talked about than seen.

Two pavilions below the Baghdad Kiosk afford interesting examples of a Turkish interior of the eighteenth century. The first is the wooden kiosk of Grand Vizier Kara Mustafa Pasha, a relative by marriage of the Kiöprülüs, who for fifty years might almost have been called a dynasty of hereditary Grand Viziers. The other is the little house that served as official residence for the Sultán's Chief Physician. Here are preserved, as they were when last in use, the furniture and stock-in-trade of this important functionary. In one corner is spread his divan, surmounted by a fine old Persian rug; in another lie his chibuqs, of enormous length; in a cupboard are his medicine bottles and the seals with which they were closed to guard against the risk of poison. In a large case is the apparatus for the confection of the *ma'jun*—a sweetmeat which it was the Chief Physician's privilege to present to the Sultan and his Court at the festival of Nevruz, in return for substantial gifts of money. Owing to the almost universal use of wood as building material, and to the frequency of fires and earthquakes, few other specimens of old Turkish domestic architecture survive in Constantinople and its neighbourhood. Practically the only one of importance is the now decaying Kiosk of Husein Pasha near Anatoli Hissar, on the Asiatic shore of the Bosphorus; and when that too disappears, the Seraglio will remain the sole repository in the capital of a charming and vanished tradition.

One last vestige of the old palace ceremonial survives in connection with the serving of coffee, which is offered in the Mejidieh Kiosk to those who visit the Seraglio. The coffee-pot, which is of enamelled silver gilt, is carried by a palace servant in a sort of censer of the same material. Another servant bears a tray with the cups and their holders (*zarfs*), the cups being of delicate egg-shell china, and the *zarfs* of gold, encrusted with rose diamonds. The tray is covered with a square of puce silk, gold embroidered, which, when the coffee is being poured out, is laid by a third servant on the tray-bearer's left shoulder. It is an interesting little ceremony in its way, albeit a pale shadow of what the Seraglio has known in its days of glory. Gone are the picturesque functionaries of the most lavish Court in history, gone the thousands of Palace guards and pages, of Bostanjis and Paltajis and Chaushes and Solaqs, and heaven knows what beside. No more do the Chief Turban-winder and the Aigrette-keeper adorn the Court, the Chief Nightingale-keeper and the Keeper of the Parrots attend to the welfare of their charges. The traditions of the pomp of centuries are in the hands of three servants in black frock-coats.

FROM THE OUTPOSTS.

UP JEBEL MURRA: A TRIP IN WESTERN DARFUR.

SOME 250 miles south-west of Khartoum as the crow flies, but over 420 miles by railway, lies El Obeid, the capital of the province of Kordofan and the southern terminus of the Sudan Government railway system.

A further 450 miles west of El Obeid, and nearly 1000 miles, by road and rail, from Khartoum, lies El Fasher, the capital of Darfur, the largest and most recently acquired province of the Anglo-Egyptian Sudan.

El Obeid and El Fasher are connected by a road which runs through an almost waterless desert country,—an enormous waste of rocky jebels and broad sandy plains sparsely covered with small bushes and stunted trees. In Kordofan itself the gum trade supports numbers of people, but, past Nahud, the native villages, or hillas, are few and far between, and, with the exception of small flocks of sheep and herds of cattle, the only animals to be seen are gazelle, and here and there a solitary ostrich.

For most of this distance the few inhabitants are entirely dependent for water on that stored in the hollow trunks of groves of tebeldi trees.

These trees, which by a wise dispensation of Providence are generally found in waterless places, are of great girth, and in many cases hold over a thousand gallons each. During the khareef, or rainy season, which here lasts about two months in the year, the natives dam up the water round the trees and fill them from the shallow pools thus formed, dipping up the water by means of goat-skin dilwers and pouring it in from the top. These natural tanks, besides providing water for the villagers themselves and their cattle, are also a great source of profit to them, in that, during the dry season, they sell the water to wayfarers at high rates.

The wayfarers along this road are mostly Fellata pilgrims tramping from Nigeria and the West Coast right across Africa to Mecca, and are themselves worthy of note. Men, women, and children start on this long journey, and taking their few goods and chattels on their heads march thousands of miles through unknown lands, braving all kinds of dangers in order to make their pilgrimage. They work their way, stopping here and there until they have accumulated sufficient funds to carry them on to the next place, often taking two or three years on the journey. Many of them settle and never reach their goal, others die; some, having reached Mecca, are seized by the Arabs and sold as slaves —though cases of this sort are

less frequent now; still more stop and settle on the way back, and never see their homes again. Yet, year in and year out, they can be seen tramping through this hot desert belt with their families, often going two or more days without water, looked down upon by all with whom they come in contact, yet in their zeal, misplaced though it may be, shewing themselves better men than most of their co-religionists in this part of the world, and an example to people of other religions in other parts.

Accustomed as one is to regard the camel as a wonderful animal because it goes for a few days without water, it comes as a surprise to find that the herds and flocks in these dry wastes are only watered every two or three days, that a native donkey will plod along with his load for a similar time without water, and that the gazelle here do not drink from khareef to khareef, a period of very nearly ten months.

The only means of transport along this road from El Obeid to Fasher is by camel, and the three weeks' journey it entails, plodding along for four or five hours each night and morning, and lying up under tree or tent during the heat of the day, is a very tiring one, and one which is absolutely devoid of interest for long stretches.

Once arrived in Fasher, which is a large native town prettily situated among trees on both sides of a khor, the country shows signs of improvement, and some hundred miles or so south-west entirely changes its character. It is in this area that Jebel Murra, the highest range in this part of Africa, raises its treble peaks to about 7000 feet above sea-level; while, on the mountain, but some 2000 feet below its highest point, nestle the mysterious Deriba Lakes.

The country round, full of interest as it is, is by no means the Africa which the name of Rider Haggard would bring to mind.

It is a vast expanse of rolling bush-country, cut by great wadis which flow swiftly in the khareef, but are dry for the rest of the year. Their tree-covered banks are inhabited by chattering monkeys and vivid green parrots. For the rest, away from the wadis, the native tracks wind through stunted bush, leafless except in the rains, while in every direction rise bare rocky jebels. A certain amount of game is to be found—lion, elephant, and buffalo, herds of hartebeeste and tiang, the much-sought-after kudo, as well as many kinds of smaller game; but, compared with other parts of Africa, they are not numerous.

The dwarfs and naked savages of Rider Haggard fame are here replaced by a comparatively mild, meek, and well-mannered race—the Furs, who, one is surprised to find, are not only all fully clothed—the men in flowing garments of native-made damaseur, and the women in a blue material,—but they also have a system of government among

themselves which approximates to our feudal system. Each hilla, or village, has its sheik, each group of hillas is under a melik, and these again are grouped into a dar under a shartai; while, in this particular district, these dars are grouped under a chief shartai, by name Boche Abdel Gabbar, who is responsible to the government. Each of these men is responsible for the well-being and general government of the people under him, and all disputes are brought to him; but, if dissatisfied with his decision, the people are free to appeal to higher authorities. Taxes are also collected by him, and he can also be called upon to provide so many men for labour or, in the old days, for fighting.

It was only in 1916 that El Fasher and Darfur, then under an absolute monarch, Sultan Ali Dinar, was taken by a small force of British and Egyptian troops operating across the desert country from the railhead. At the present moment there is still an independent, though friendly, monarch, Sultan Bahr el Din, or Andeka, of Dar Messalite, sandwiched in between the Wardai and the Sudan.

Zalingie, an outstation some 200 miles south-west of El Fasher, and about 70 miles west of the nearest point of Jebel Murra, is the centre of administration of this Western Darfur. Here a solitary British officer dispenses justice to all and sundry, rules a country of the approximate size of Scotland through the native shartais, and keeps his small garrison of black troops in training.

His work includes everything from deciding the ownership of a donkey to dealing with murder cases, and from building the weird mud and grass houses used in this part to making roads and despatching many tons of grain along them to help feed Fasher. Generally speaking, he maintains law and order, and develops the country.

It is a lonely job, four days' journey from the next solitary white, and so remote from home and beauty that it takes nearly two and a half months to get there; but it has its compensations.

The country is good, mostly unexplored, and full of interest to a student of nature, while within a short distance of the post there are a dozen kinds of game to be shot.

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It was from Zalingie that, following a relief there, two of us set off to trek into Fasher, and if possible to climb Jebel Murra to the lakes on the way. We had been making history—for were not five Turcs (as the natives still persist in calling Britishers) at Zalingie at one time, though only for a few days!

Such a concentration of troops, due to a shortage of grain in other parts of the province and the difficulties of transporting it thereto, had never been seen there before. Consequently the two chief shartais, Boche Abdel Gabbar and Atim Ahmed, signalised

the event by giving us a "fantasia" as a send-off.

The native of these parts has very little idea of time. His only way of expressing it is by saying "shams kida" (the sun so), while pointing to that part of the sky which the sun should be in at the time he refers to. So, though we had expressed our intention of starting at four in the afternoon, we were by no means surprised to hear a loud beating of delukkas (the native drums) and squealing of pipes coming from the village about half-past one. This as it came nearer was supported by a few hundred voices chanting in unison and the clapping of many hands.

They apparently stopped some distance away, and so we proceeded with lunch.

Four o'clock came, and with it the groaning of camels, which sent us outside to superintend the shidding (loading).

This was the signal for the start of the fantasia.

Imagine a blazing sun and a burnt-up landscape, its shades of brown relieved away to the left by the green foliage of trees along the banks of a wadi, and the skyline cut to the right by a line of low jebels.

To the front is a cleared sandy space several hundred yards in extent, set in the middle of which is the post, a collection of mud- and grass-built huts, surrounded by a thick thorn zareba and flaunting a Union Jack and the white stars and crescents of Egypt on separate poles.

On the farther edge of this cleared space stands a great crowd of natives, mounted and on foot, the horsemen dressed in garments of all the colours of the rainbow, the men on foot in the soberer hues of native damanour. The delukkas throb and the pipes squeal. Suddenly two horsemen detach themselves and come tearing up at full gallop waving swords high in the air. Just a few yards away they pull their horses up on their haunches and with a friendly grin and more waving of swords make way for three others who, riding leg to leg as hard as their sturdy ponies can gallop, tear up to us with spear-points lowered and antediluvian rifles slung across their backs. They, too, rein their ponies back on their haunches just as they appear to be about to crash into us, and, with the ponies' mouths bleeding from the effects of the cruel native bit, draw aside to make room for others. And so they come, singly or in threes, fours, or sixes, every man armed with sword, spear, or old blunderbus—some with all three—and all in glaring colours. One may be clad in a yellow gallabiya with a red sash and white crossbelt, another in blue, green, and yellow, and so on, until the eye positively aches in the kaleidoscope of shifting colour.

At last a solitary horseman in a glaring red robe decorated with gold tassels comes full split, methodically aiming spear after spear at us. This is Atim Ahmed, the Neumaton,

or Chief Shartai of Dar Kerne, in the north; he is a veritable arsenal of old-time weapons, and wears a sort of crown of crochet work. He makes way for three rather more richly dressed sharati, the centre one of whom is Beche Abdel Gabbar, the Chief Shartai of Dar Abu Dirna, or, to give him his title, the Dumangawi. They, too, rein in their horses when within an ace of dashing into us, and, turning, dash off to rejoin the rest, who have now formed a line about three hundred yards away. Beche and Atim take their places in the centre of the line, and with squeals of the pipes and redoubled whackings of the delukkas, the whole party comes forward at a slow march, each of the seventy or eighty mounted men with twenty or thirty unmounted retainers behind him. The musicians break into a sort of triumphant march, through which runs a weird rhythm, and as they come forward many of the ponies prance in unison.

The scene is weird in the extreme, and one is convinced of the unreality of it all; it is a mediæval pageant at which one is assisting, not a native show in the heart of Africa.

Fifty yards away the line halts, and the musicians push their way to the front. They are about thirty in number, half vigorously blowing pipes made of reeds or horn, and the others thrumming delukkas, which in most cases are skin-covered gourds.

Every man dances to the rhythm as he plays, and the leader, a short, squat, and intensely ugly man thrumming a barrel-shaped delukka, goes into the most weird contortions and yet keeps perfect time to the "music."

'Punch,' that most reliable of newspapers, had told us of the most recent innovation at home, connected with a dance called the Jazz. We looked at each other, and the same thought flashed into our minds. Here was a jazz band!

The horsemen halt, and with the band still in full cry our many-coloured friends dismount. The most important gentry, led by Beche and Atim, slip off their markubs (slippers) and form a half-circle round us. After many muttered "Tayebines," "Shedeeds?" and other expressions indicating their deep concern in the matter of our healths, accompanied by repeated handshakes, they mount again and draw off a little distance, prepared to accompany us for a part of the way.

The camels are ready, the signal is given to start, and we ride towards the hills, a motley crowd several hundred strong, with the baggage-camels marching sedately in the rear. Through the hills the women turn out and add their shrill "Lu lu lus" to the efforts of the band, which is still going in full blast.

Down to and across the wadi we go, a pandemonium of sound and a glare of colour, and, a mile or so the other side, halt to take leave of our escort.

This entails many more handshakes and expressions of concern for our health and future happiness, and for the health of our families. The band is not so easily got rid of, however, and, whether urged on by the largesse they have received or the merissa (native beer) they have taken, continue with us for another half-mile or so, still playing and dancing vigorously, as indeed they have played and danced since we first made their acquaintance some three and a half hours before.

A little farther on and the commandant bids us *au revoir* and turns back to his lonely duties.

Darkness falls soon after, but we continue along the winding native tracks under a brilliant moon, and, some four hours after leaving Zalingie, find ourselves sitting down to dinner in a wadi about ten miles on our journey, with our camp-beds waiting for us, and the men grouped round a couple of fires.

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"Shi hadr effendim!" (Tea's ready, sir.) How many dawns with the brilliant stars shining down from a black void, and the red fire blazing, does that phrase bring back to the traveller in the Sudan! A final roll over, a grunt and a stretch, and one realises that it is after 3 A.M., and that one is due to commence another day's trek.

The loud protestations of the camels a little way off show that they are being loaded, and with a weary sigh one gulps down the hot tea while one dresses. The latter operation does not take very long, as trekking kit generally consists of simply shirt, shorts, and a helmet, besides, of course, socks, boots, and gaiters, and one generally finds oneself astride the pony, with camp-bed and all other baggage loaded, within half an hour of waking. The mornings are apt to be cold, and often one is more than glad of a comforter and greatcoat as well.

3.30 A.M., the morning after leaving Zalingie, found us on the move from Showa, our halting-place overnight, and, riding on well ahead of the camels, we watched the light gradually growing behind Jebel Murra, which was standing clear-cut in the dawn. Animals, disturbed at our approach, rustled away right and left, while somewhere ahead of us a brain-fever bird ran up his maddening scale.

As the sun began to show his rim above the Jebel a great herd of tetl—big animals the size of a mule—sprang up from almost underfoot and were away. A little later a long shot at a gazelle provided us with meat—and very good gazelle meat is—for that day.

The country passed through here, sunbaked as it was, had a charm of its own. The track wound among leafless trees and scrubby bushes, which effectually prevented our seeing far. Here and there, however, as the path wound up or descended a long slope, we had a view over a vast expanse of tree-covered

country, of a uniform brown for the most part, but with here and there streaks of vivid green showing the path of the wadis, while many small rocky jebels were dotted over the landscape.

Soon the path led us down to the edge of a wide wadi, and followed it for some two miles before crossing its dry bed to wind among the stunted trees and bushes again.

Here we rode beneath a profusion of cool green foliage, a welcome change from uninterrupted sun. Brilliant green parakeets and the little green and blue parrot, said to be the smallest true parrot in the world, which is found here, flew shrieking above us, while an occasional family of small brown monkeys hurriedly effaced themselves in bush or tree. Birds of many unknown kinds, some brilliant and some sober in plumage, perched on the trees, while now and again gazelle, hartebeeste or tetl trotted away after a wondering glance at us.

Soon after eight o'clock brought us to Hilla Aro, outside which we unloaded the camels, and half an hour after stopping were sitting down, shaved and washed, to breakfast.

The heat of the day on these treks is passed in sleeping or reading in the tent, so that it was not until after four in the afternoon that the camels were again shidded, and eight o'clock that night found us camped near the Duggu wells, receiving the local sheik. He had come to bid us welcome, followed by a long line of men bearing grain, chickens, eggs, milk, and, a curious find in a waterless country, two large fish.

These fish are one of the natural wonders of the country. Trekking along in a dry waste one is delighted to have fresh fish presented for breakfast or dinner, and the first time it happens, one can scarcely believe the evidence of one's own eyes. On asking the cook where the water is, and being told that there is no water, but that they are dug up from the ground, one is inclined to tax him with being a bigger liar than usual; but that is actually the case. These fish, supposed to be a species of cat-fish, burrow in the damp sand or mud under the wadis when the water ceases to flow, and hibernate there. The natives dig for them during the dry season. It is the more wonderful as the wadis only run for, at most, two months in the year, so that the fish spend ten months out of water, and yet live. A similar fish is also found in dry branches of the Upper Nile.

Two days later, after a trek in which the only traces of big game seen were the tracks of some lion and elephant, we were settling down below the village of Kalla Ketting, from where we proposed starting up the Jebel.

Our arrival soon became known, and the shartai, Ali Abdel Gelil, came down the steep slope from the hills, which was prettily situated

among the foothills of the Jebel, and above a wadi which was a veritable riot of green.

Ali was evidently dressed for the occasion, and was gorgeous in a red robe of honour, and carried the brass sword. He was followed by a long string of men bearing presents — rakkers of dura, wheat, and onions, burmas of honey, bowls of milk, and enough fireweed to last a week, as well as two or three live sheep. Hospitality of this sort is met with all through the district, and to refuse it is to dishonour the giver. Gifts of sugar, tea, soap, or cigarettes are always appreciated in return, though to give anything generally means fresh presents in embarrassing quantities.

Having been presented to all Ali's chief relatives and friends, we broke the news to him that we wanted to ascend the Jebel to the Deriba Lakes, and asked him to give us transport and guides. He jumped at the idea, and promised to send his two sons with us.

Early next morning the two sons, Sulieman Senussi and Mahomet Taur, appeared, together with eight donkeys. These were loaded with the few necessaries we required, and with the first glimmer of dawn we started the ascent.

At first the path led gently out of the wadi on to a wide plateau, but as we went on this became rockier and rockier, until we found ourselves on a rock ledge overlooking a ravine. Up and up we plodded, slipping and scrambling over rocks, and wondering if the donkeys would ever get up certain places.

An hour and a half of stiff going brought us to the top of a rocky ridge, from where we had a view of great masses of rock upflung about us, while away below was Kalla Ketting perched on its hill, with the green wadi winding away through a brown scorched landscape. From here onwards the hillsides were all terraced for cultivation, and it was evident that a much larger population than is on the Jebel at present had been supported there.

A couple of hours later we were crossing the Wadi Gindi in which was running water. The sight of this wadi, with its green-clad banks, proved irresistible,—for in this part of the Sudan Jebel Murra is the only place where running water can be found, except in the khareef,—and we halted here for the heat of the day. Just above was a large slice of cultivated land on which a number of men and women were working, but, being unaccustomed to the sight of white men, they ran away as soon as they saw us, and we saw them no more.

Late that afternoon found us ascending by a species of chimney to another plateau, across which the path ran until it led us on to a narrow ledge two-thirds of the way up the side of a huge ravine in which, hundreds of feet below, we could faintly hear the plash of falling water.

Here we came across several large trees which leaned out at seemingly impossible angles from the almost perpendicular wall of the ravine, and appeared to draw all their nourishment from bare rock. A winding path up a huge buttress gave us a wonderful view of the wild masses of rock cut by great ravines which lay at our feet, and a scramble over another ridge brought us in view of Hilla Tirbas, where we stopped the night.

This hilla, its tukls built of slabs of stone roofed with grass, was set on the top of a rounded hill whose slopes were a perfect maze of terracing. It is on these terraces that the wheat, for which Jebel Murra is renowned, is grown. Curiously enough the inhabitants do not use much of it themselves, though they give it to their animals, but exchange it for dura with the people of the plains below.

Early next morning found us descending the side of a great gorge with seven or eight porters carrying our kit, although three of the donkeys were still with us. The bottom of the gorge reached, we were confronted by a veritable wall of rock, up which it seemed almost impossible to climb. However, a rough path ran up the face, and ten minutes stiff climbing brought us to the top. From this point onward we seemed to keep along the top of a ridge which followed round a valley lying between us and the lower slopes of the main peaks, still far away. Wild figs grew in abundance on stunted bushes, and great numbers of big dog-faced baboons chattered at us as we approached.

An hour's steady climbing brought us to Babrei, where we halted for a while.

This village, like the two or three others we passed on the Jebel, was evidently built to withstand attack and also to keep out wild animals. The whole hilla was surrounded by a wall composed of rough rock some two or three feet thick and perhaps seven feet high, surmounted by a palisade of stakes and brushwood leaning outwards at an acute angle. Inside this wall each tukl, or group of tukls, was surrounded by a wall on the same plan, entrance being obtained by a low archway in the wall barred by strong baulks of timber. The tukls themselves were strongly built of rough stone, with grass roofs.

From Babrei to Dimbitting, the next hilla, the path was more than rough, and entailed an hour's hard climbing.

At Dimbitting we found Mahomet Taur, who had gone ahead, waiting with a few of the notables to welcome us. To be frank, we did not appreciate the welcome as much as the eggs, chickens, tomatoes, and onions they brought — for, a short time previously, the cook had told us that he had none too many of these commodities, and Sulieman had told us that this was the last village we should strike. That is one of the little peculiarities of the Sudanese servant — he never thinks of telling you that you

are out of anything until you are miles from anywhere, and without the faintest prospect of being able to get it. Then, and only then, he will come to you and say in his matter-of-fact way, "Mafish beid" or "Lahm," or whatever it is he has ran out of, and expect you to "amel tarteeb" (make an arrangement) just as if you possessed the property of being able to bring down manna from heaven. And even your language on such an occasion will never move him from his belief that he is the best servant in the world. Modesty is never a failing of the Sudanese.

Just before reaching Dimbitting we came across a good specimen of the leopard-trap used on the Jebel. This consists of a tunnel-like cage built of large stones, with a heavy piece of timber at each of the ends, so contrived as to form portcullis-like doors. These doors are held up by ropes running over the top and down through a hole in the centre of the tunnel. On this rope is fixed the bait—a piece of meat—so that, when the animal enters and seizes this, the doors are released, imprisoning it. The leopard is then killed by being speared through the chinks in the stones.

From Dimbitting the path lay through ravines and over ridges whose every inch was terraced. Here there was quite a lot of sparse vegetation, including the stunted fig-trees, among which great numbers of baboons were busy.

At last, on topping one ridge, we had a magnificent view of the main part of the Jebel. A wall of rock, rising to the main peaks on the left, confronted us; while to the right, and slightly below us, this was cut by a gap through which, our guides told us, lay the path to the lakes.

Between us and the rocky wall lay a wide and deep ravine, perhaps two miles across and 900 feet deep, in the bottom of which lay a well-wooded wadi. This ravine was broken by several lower ridges, while to left and right its further course was hidden from view by huge rock buttresses.

The descent was almost precipitous, and seemed several degrees worse than the climb up to the mountain wall on the other side. The path, as a matter of fact, roughly followed the course of the wadi (our old friend Gindi), whose source we found just before passing through the gap. Here the path plunged into a water-worn passage through the soft rock whose sides, at most three or four feet apart, towered above us for over a hundred feet.

The wadi itself was a riot of all shades of green, and the tinkle of its water as it fell over small waterfalls and flashed among the rocks was a most refreshing sound to ears which had not heard running water for many months.

Juniper, ferns of all sorts, and an abundance of bracken, not often seen in these latitudes,

abounded, while trees which, if not willows, were suspiciously like them, leaned over the stream. Not only the vegetation but the birds, whose songs mingled with the plash of the stream, were entirely different to those found in the country below.

A stiff climb up a last ridge brought us to the gap which we had seen from afar, and gave us our first view of the lower Deriba lake.

Looking from the ridge we were confronted with an immense amphitheatre of hills, of which the gap we were on formed the lowest part. This amphitheatre was perhaps four miles long by three across, and rose almost sheer from 1000 to 2000 feet above the plain which it enclosed.

Away to the right at the end of this plain was the lake, looking a mere pond in the distance. Its surface was a dirty greenish colour, and surrounding it was a white ring of salt. Two-thirds of the way across the plain rose a low hill which, we afterwards found, hid the second lake from view.

A scramble down some 400 feet of loose rock brought us to the level of the plain, where we camped under a large tree.

From the plain the circle of hills looked enormous, and seemed absolutely unbroken save by the gap over which we had come. Very little vegetation was apparent, a few large trees round the edges of the plain and the coarse grass everywhere being all that was visible.

The lake, on closer inspection, proved far larger than we had thought, and must be some 1800 yards long by 1400 broad, being about 3½ miles in circumference. It appears shallow, and its waters are very salt, while the banks are encrusted with a white salt deposit. This is rather curious, as, a hundred yards away, a stream of absolutely fresh water bubbles out of the ground and runs for two or three hundred yards from the lake before disappearing in a small marsh.

This lake is called by the natives the "female" lake. The "male" lake, which we visited next morning, lies about a mile to the south-west and somewhat above, hidden by the low ridge we had seen from the gap.

This second or upper lake, though a little smaller than the first, is much more imposing. It lies in a crater whose rocky walls rise sheer from the surface of the lake to a height of 500-800 feet, except on the side from which we approached, where, for a short distance, the ridge is only about 100 feet high, and slopes down to the lake, which appears to be of great depth. The water is green and clear, and not so salt as the lower lake.

Neither lake has any visible outlet. The lower one has five or six streams flowing into it during the khareef, and must drain a large area, so that the inflow during the rains must be very great. In view of this, it is curious that the high-water mark is only some 18

inches above its dry season level, so that it points to there being some subterranean outlet. Though not draining anything like so large an area, the upper lake has the same small rise and fall.

The whole plain, and the hills surrounding it, evidently formed the crater of a volcano at one time, and it would appear that the lakes lie in the last two vents. The volcanic formation is particularly noticeable with regard to the upper lake, and, in fact, there are outcrops of igneous rock all over the jebel.

The lakes, especially the upper one, are regarded with great awe by the Fur, and few venture near them. They have a widespread reputation as an oracle, and, when fleeing from Fasher, Sultan Ali Dinar is said to have sent a deputation to ask their advice. According to the deputation, the waters rose and forbade their approach —probably they were too timorous themselves to go near.

None of our porters, however, exhibited any uneasiness at stopping in the vicinity for the night, and we saw two or three flocks, tended by men or boys, grazing in the crater during the day.

We had ourselves to confess to a somewhat eerie feeling on looking down on the upper lake, even in broad daylight; while the view of the lakes and the whole crater by the light of a fitful moon, obscured by light clouds, was very uncanny. The silence of the place was unbroken, and if one excepted the flocks during the day, and a few hawks, there appeared to be neither bird nor beast there. Certainly these lakes, lying as they do right up a jebel, embody many curious features, and their whole situation is such as to inspire awe in the native mind; while the five whites who have as yet visited them, besides ourselves, all noticed the same thing.

Coming up from the hot plains we found the climate at this altitude cool and invigorating, and were able to walk through the heat of the day without the least distress. So fresh were we after our fifty mile walk, or rather climb, that we were all for pushing on to the top of what appeared to be the main peak. However, considerations of time and shortage of food prevented us, and lunch-time on the day following our arrival found us over the gap and following the Wadi Gindi down from its source.

The climb back out of the big ravine proved very severe, but nightfall found us once more being received by the hospitable villagers of Hilla Tirbas, who brought out the customary burmas of water, rakkers of grain, and firewood. We turned in after dinner that night glad that we had three blankets and a greatcoat each, besides a fire at our feet.

Early next morning saw us on the way down, and, with a midday halt at the crossing over the wadi, we were back at Kalla Ketting by five o'clock that afternoon.

Perhaps one of the most noticeable things of the trip

was the way the jebel-bred donkeys got up and down. Sure-footed as goats, they carried their loads over the most atrocious of surfaces, getting up places where one had literally to climb with hands and feet, and descending places which were difficult for a man to get down.

At Kalla Ketting we found the ponies waiting for us, and on being joined by Ali Abdel Gelil and all his friends and relatives, rode out some three or four miles to the camp. This had been moved down the wadi to where there was good grazing for the camels, and less chance of their being injured by the leopards and lions which were said to be doing much damage to the flocks in Kalla Ketting itself.

Next morning, after many farewells to genial old Ali and his relatives, an early shid took us into Dibbis, and the evening of the sixth day after leaving there saw us entering El Fasher, after a very uneventful trek, to the tune of "We're glad to see you're back," as played by the band of the 9th Sudanese.

Jebel Murra with its mysterious lakes, and the little-known West, into which the sun was sinking, was already a memory to us, withal a haunting and fascinating one; and our minds, directed by the music, were toying with times that had gone and others that were yet to come.

MUSINGS WITHOUT METHOD.

COBDENITIS — IRELAND AND THE DISTRESSED POLITICIANS — MR ASQUITH BOILS OVER—THE CURSE OF POLITICAL EXPEDIENCY —THE JEWISH CONSPIRACY.

If the whole of Europe were reduced to ashes and dust, if England were cut off from the Continent without any hope of communication by air or sea, if our mines were flooded and our corn-fields were laid waste, if not a penny-piece were left in the Treasury, a few devout Cobdenites would meet together in a corner and mumble about the blessings of free imports. So long as the war lasted even Mr Asquith and his friends were the gallant champions of protection. They passed and applauded the resolutions of Paris, as though they thought that the prosperity and independence of their own land were of some importance. To-day the war and its lessons are forgotten, and the Cobden Club, which was supported six years ago largely by interested Germans, has met once more to preach its familiar gospel and to bestow its blessing upon the late enemies of England.

It is unlikely that the Cobden Club thinks any more highly of free trade than it did before the war. It still keeps its eye fixed fanatically upon free imports, in complete forgetfulness of the truth that if Germany had not used Britain as its dumping-ground, if she had not been able to sustain, greatly at our expense, her factory of aniline dyes, the peace of the world would not have been broken. And to be sure the Cobdenites had nothing new to say, no new plan to explain. Even if they forced Britain to accept their narrow dogma, they would be as far off from free trade as ever; they would still be encouraging hostile countries, strong in their own protection, to take advantage of our defencelessness. But threadbare as their thought, expressed in familiar speeches, appears to be, their meeting was not wholly ineffectual. For it disclosed the plain truth that what our sentimentalists hanker after is not so much the thing they falsely call free trade, as the renewed friendship of their former masters, the Germans.

If all had gone well in the conventicle, the meeting of the Cobden Club would have been the triumph of Germany. To the Boches were assigned the *beaux rôles*. The famous Herr Butzke had promised to attend and to speak. He did not. Dr Paul Arndt, the distinguished professor of Frankfurt University, might himself have deigned to cross the Channel, had he not objected to the Treaty of Versailles. Think what we have lost by winning the war! Had we succumbed, as doubtless many of our

Cobdenites hoped that we should, to the might of Germany, Dr Paul Arndt and many another hero might have been living comfortably and profitably in our midst. Alas! we do not always know what is good for us, and thus we are deprived of the presence and co-operation of the amiable Boche. In other words, Dr Arndt sulked and refused obstinately to smile upon the English brethren. He contented himself with inditing an Open Letter, copies of which were thrown broadcast over the conventicle. Dr Arndt did not mince matters; he used no soft words; he covered the pious Cobdenites with shame and spared them not. How could he, a virtuous Boche, whose countrymen had massacred Belgium and outraged France, confer with British Cobdenites who, in spite of their goodwill to Germany, had been unable to prevent "the enslavement of the German people ordained in the numerous clauses of the treaty," who were forced to look on in silent sorrow when their Club's "fine programme was trodden underfoot at Versailles"? These are the Boche's own words, who furthermore proved his tact by describing the treaty of Versailles in a conference which was supposed to be international, as "an instrument of martyrdom."

No Englishman uttered a word of protest. The British Cobdenite, in peace or in war, is ready to kiss the rod that strikes him. It was reserved for a Belgian, Dr Strauss of Antwerp, to make a just and dignified protest against the large place given in the agenda to German speakers (who in the end did not venture to appear), and to the translation and free distribution of Dr Arndt's letter. "He declared," so says the newspaper report, "that so long as the Germans did not admit the wrong they had committed against Belgium, did not express remorse, and had not made reparation, he could not assist in a Conference that gave a place of honour to them. That would place him in a wrong position. It might be possible some day, without forgetting what had happened, to start afresh, but before that could be those who had done the wrong must express their regret. It was a great principle with his countrymen that the treaty of Versailles should be executed, as Germany had signed it, as a high premium against the invasion and destruction of her territories."

Thus Dr Strauss of Antwerp—and doubtless his plain speech fell upon the pacific Cobdenites, who worship cheapness more devoutly than justice or honour, like a bomb. The situation was not without its humour. The Conference might have been broken up, as the Society was broken up on the Stanislaus, by the exchange of blocks of old red sandstone, had such blocks been handy, and had not the worthy Cobdenites been quiet peaceable citizens. They did their best, ineffectually, to soothe the just anger of

Dr Strauss, and their best was bad indeed. M. Yves Guyot, who proudly declared that he had not read Dr Arndt's letter, attempted to make a difference between the political and the economic question. He wasted his labour. Politics and economics are inextricably confused. Cheapness itself is a moral, not a commercial issue. To isolate economics from politics is merely to bolster up a sham science. Should Germany be held to her pledged word, as she will be if we are not meanly led astray by the sophistries of Cobdenites and others, the political results of a just and enforced payment of money due from her will have an immense and lasting effect upon international relations. If prices or taxes rise or fall, the result of the rise or fall must always be moral and political. Many years ago Coleridge, the wise foe of the absurd thing named political economy—a "solemn humbug" he called it—set the truth in a paragraph. "You talk about making this article cheaper by reducing its price in the market from 8d. to 6d. But suppose in so doing"—thus he wrote—"you have rendered your country weaker against a foreign foe; suppose you have demoralised thousands of your fellow-countrymen, and have sown discontent between one class of society and another, your article is tolerably dear, I take it, after all. Is not its real price enhanced to every Christian and patriot a hundredfold?" Of course it is, and this is what the Cobdenites will not remember. They believe that foreign corn is better of itself than home-grown corn, if only it be cheaper; and that, if we can fill our pockets by trading instantly with a spared, encouraged Germany we shall do better for ourselves and for Europe than if by the proper punishment of Germany we teach the world a needed lesson of justice and humanity. They are futile folk the economists, and they live in a vacuum.

However, M. Yves Guyot's distinction availed him nothing. He left the last word to Dr Strauss, who for the sake of irony agreed with his adversary about the separation of economics from politics and sentiment. "All nations," said he, "make treaties and establish trade relations with the savages of Africa, and why should we not make trade treaties with those who have proved themselves barbarians during the war, since between savages and barbarians the difference is not great?" The Cobdenites, who care only for free ports and open doors, and who do not question the decency of those who can make their pocket-knives or shoe-laces a little cheaper, shuddered no doubt at the comparison of these dear Boches with savages; but it is certain that morally and intellectually Dr Strauss of Antwerp had the best of it, and left the apostles of Manchester regretting that ever

they set the winged words of Dr Arndt into English.

Herr Edouard Bernstein, a member of the German Reichstag, was overcome by the same modesty which withheld the illustrious Dr Arndt from his friends and colleagues. He wrote a paper, and, alas! was forced to be content with its circulation in the Conference. He condescended, kindly, to give us a brief history of England during the nineteenth century, and held out little hope for the future. "Protection made for war," said he, "and war for protection." With a complete ignorance of the facts he declared that Mr George's Fiscal Reforms had for their object to close the door for ever on protection. Mr George's "Fiscal Reforms" had no other object than to stir up class-hatred, in which amiable purpose they succeeded. In all else they failed miserably, and have to-day no other than an archæological interest. "But a tragic irony of fate decreed"—thus proceeds Herr Bernstein—"that, under this very Government, England entered, in August 1914, into the world-war, which was let loose by the protectionist continent, and which, as it proceeded, aroused such intense bitterness in both camps that it now threatened to become the foster-parent of protection." From Herr Bernstein's point of view the fate was assuredly tragic, which drove England into the war, and yet it does not seem that her staying out of it would have helped the cause of free trade. And why did not the member of the Reichstag make a full confession of the facts that Germany was, and is, and ever will be protectionist, and that Britain, by her foolish policy of one-sided free trade, injures herself and benefits her enemies? But the virtuous Cobdenite remembers nothing and discovers nothing. He has already forgotten that the submarines brought us to the verge of starvation, and is praying that the land of Britain may speedily go out of cultivation. For him it is not ignoble that we should eat the bread of idleness and should pay others to collect eggs and to make butter for us. He has elevated what should be a policy into a sentimental dogma; and if in the next war we are all starved to death, he will still be found muttering to his German conqueror and taskmaster that there is nothing like free trade after all.

The present situation in Ireland has the same effect upon our old bemused politicians as a late summer has upon surprised hibernating flies. It brings them all out to buzz noisily and ineffectually upon the window-panes of the daily press. And the wonder is not that they should buzz ineffectually, but that they should buzz at all. They have, every one of them, shameful pasts, which we should have thought they would like to conceal. The temptation is too strong for them. They must still be talking, though

a little knowledge or a spark of humour would have kept them silent. They are, in truth, responsible by their negligence and folly for the bloodshed which they pretend to deplore, and had they been anything else than politicians, debauched by the cynicism and levity of their trade, they would surely have kept silence. They have nothing of any value to suggest or propose. Yet they must take refuge in speech. It was Lord Morley who began it, and Lord Morley was followed at brief intervals by Viscount Grey of Falledon and Mr Asquith. There remains only Mr Birrell. Is it possible that he will not let us share the fruits of his shameful experience?

It is many years since Lord Morley first pointed out the easy path of inaction. He cared nothing for law and order. His natural sympathies were for the criminal. A murdered policeman seemed to him a plain inconvenience, and he was never so happy, it seemed, as when he let a murderer out of jail. That which he did at Gweedore has been ever since a beacon light of hope to the assassin and the incendiary. Yet he has his plan ready, and is eloquent in denunciation of those who would restore by a just policy of repression peace and justice to rebel-ridden Ireland. His sin is bad enough; it is venial in comparison with the sin of Mr Asquith. And Mr Asquith, who by this time has probably forgotten all about Easter Day and Lord Hardinge's Commission, if indeed he ever took a passing interest in them, comes forth, unashamed, with a proposal of Dominion Home Rule, and urges that Ireland should have complete control over her own navy and army. What Mr Asquith means by coming out at all from his retirement we do not know. Triple indeed must be his brass covering if he thinks that any citizen of Great Britain can look back without horror upon his disgraceful record in Ireland. Even though he has been reckless enough once more to call attention to his failure, it must be as clear to him as to others that we shall never yield to Ireland the control of her armed forces until we have been beaten in the field. The question is not worth arguing. We are content to quote once again the well-measured opinion which Captain Mahan held and explained many years ago. "It is impossible," said Captain Mahan, who spoke with authority, "for a military man or a statesman with appreciation of military conditions to look at the map and not perceive that the ambition of the Irish Separatists, if realised, would be even more threatening to the national life of Great Britain than the secession of the South was to that of the American Union. It would be deadlier also to Imperial aspirations; for Ireland, by geographical position, lies across and controls the communications of Great Britain with all the outside world, save only that considerable but far from preponderating position which borders the

North Sea and the Baltic. Independent and hostile, it could manacle Great Britain, which at present is, and for years to come must remain, by long odds, the most powerful member of the Federation, if it take that form. The Irish question, therefore, is vitally important not only to Great Britain but to the Colonies. The legislative supremacy of the British Parliament . . . cannot be yielded in the case of an island where independent action might very well be attended with fatal consequences to its partner. The instrument for such action in the shape of an independent Parliament could not be trusted even to avowed friends." There is Mr Asquith's answer, and we can hardly believe, even in the confused state of public opinion, that any sane man would prefer the authority of Mr Asquith to the authority of Captain Mahan.

But to take the true measure of Mr Asquith's indelicacy in interfering in the matter of Ireland at all, we have but to turn back to the report of Lord Hardinge's Commission. It is unlikely that Messrs Asquith and Birrell were ever at the pains to read this report. It is certain that Mr Asquith found its discussion "inexpedient," and neither of the two statesmen, so far as is known, has donned a white sheet or stood in the pillory. Their callousness, indeed, is not easily intelligible. Here is the explanation of the Easter Day rebellion given by the Commissioners, unbiassed men and wholly free from partisan prejudice. "The main cause of the rebellion," they wrote, "appears to be that lawlessness was allowed to grow up unchecked, and that Ireland for several years past has been administered on the principle that it was safer and more expedient to leave law in abeyance if collision with any faction of the Irish people could thereby be avoided." So the gamblers, Mr Asquith and his colleagues, applied the same principle to Ireland which served them in their relations with foreign powers. They subordinated everything to political expediency and hoped for the best. The logical result was the rebellion of Easter Day and the wanton slaughter of English soldiers. And whose direct fault was it? "We are of opinion," say the Commissioners, "that the Chief Secretary, as the administrative head of your Majesty's Government, is primarily responsible for the situation that was allowed to arise and the outbreak that occurred." Mr Birrell was "primarily responsible," and Mr Asquith was responsible not only for Mr Birrell's appointment but for his abject policy of submission to Mr Redmond and the Nationalists.

Nor can Mr George escape his share of the infamy. He was a member of the Cabinet which made Ireland's conspiracy with Germany certain, and which deluged Ireland in blood. Mr George, too, is an adept in that fatal policy

which subordinates law and order to political expedienoy. For a year he has permitted murder and rapine to stalk through Ireland. The blood of many a slaughtered policeman is upon his inactive hand. And then suddenly he was moved to make the speech of a man and a statesman. It has been said by a wit that the most powerful man in England is the last one who spoke to Mr George. Who was it, we wonder, who inspired Mr George with the rudiments of truth and wisdom when he spoke out at Carnarvon?

Whosever was the inspiration, the speech itself was brave and fearless. Mr George pointed out with an admirable lucidity that more had been done to redress the errors of the past in Ireland than in any country. He pictured, with excellent force, the brutality and cunning wherewith policemen and soldiers going quietly about their duty had been murdered. "Five policemen," said he, "were driving along a road in Ireland. They are suddenly fired at by civilians. If a policeman had seen the assassins ten minutes before he would have thought they were harmless-looking farmers looking after their flocks or the crops. They used soft-nosed explosive bullets. A second car with police comes up in two minutes. It was what the assassins did not reokon with. Finding these men not merely killed but mutilated almost beyond description, they found the men who were undoubtedly the assassins and they shot them. Are you surprised?" We are not surprised that the policemen shot the assassins. We are surprised at the anger, a trifle belated, of Mr George, who hitherto has not shown much sorrow at the murder of heroes, and whose government in Ireland has been the negation of government.

Thus greatly daring, he swept away the cobwebs of falsehood with which the sentimentalists have besmirched what have been called reprisals. "The police," says he, "naturally feel that the time has come for them to defend themselves." It has indeed, and since Mr George's Government has hitherto refrained from defending them, they are right to defend themselves. Nor, in his present mood, is Mr George content to stay at that point. "You must restore order," says he, "by measures very stern. You cannot permit the country to be debased into a condition of complete anarchy." It is a pity that Mr George did not make that simple discovery before. "A small body of assassins, a real murder gang," thus he goes on, "are dominating the country and terrorising it and making it impossible for reasonable men to come together to consider the best way of governing the country, . . . and it is essential in the interests of Ireland that that gang should be broken up, and unless I am mistaken we shall do it." Again we regret that Mr George did not take this essential duty in hand years

ago. How much bloodshed and misery would he have spared us and Ireland.

Then with excellent justice he compared the situation in Ireland with the situation of the Southern States of America. "There is a limit," he said, speaking with the voice of statesmanship, "as Abraham Lincoln discovered, to the disruptive rights of a minority. . . . The Southern States had just as good a right to set up an independent Republic as Ireland, Wales, or Scotland. . . . History now shows that Abraham Lincoln was absolutely right in saying there is a limit to the right which even a separate community has to tear up a large combination that has been working together for common ends. That is the limit in Ireland." That is also the limit, if Mr George had only found it out before, in India, which has been rent asunder to please Messrs Montagu and Gandhi, and in Egypt, which for no motive that is visible has been handed over to Zaghlul and his friends.

For Mr Asquith and his policy of Dominion Home Rule Mr George reserved his fiercest scorn. He pointed out with unerring force the danger of Dominion Home Rule, which would give Ireland a navy and an army of her own, and leave her ports wholly uncontrolled by us, with the power of closing them against us if she chose. This is what Mr Asquith would give Ireland in order to satisfy her. As though Ireland would be satisfied, even if we put England, Scotland, and Wales under her vindictive heel! She doesn't want to be satisfied. She wants a grievance, which she can growl and snap over as a dog growls and snaps over a bone. And Mr George had no difficulty in proving that Mr Asquith, in his foolish desire to deprive Ireland of her grievance, would endanger at once and destroy finally the British Empire. "Do you know," he asked, "that Ireland was our worry during the war? . . . Ireland was a real peril. They were in touch with German submarines. There it stands at the gateway of Britain; you cannot turn to the right, you cannot turn to the left, except by either the right or left gate of Ireland. . . . It is girdled with British wrecks; yes, and British seamen are there too; and we are to hand over Ireland to be made a base of the submarine fleet, and we are to trust to luck in our next war. Was there ever such lunacy proposed by anybody?"

No: there never was such lunacy proposed, not even by Mr George himself, who, now that he is momentarily awake, sees plainly enough the danger which confronts Great Britain. "Don't you take these risks," says he. "This is a great country—a great country; it has done more for human freedom than any other country. Don't risk its destinies and its future through any folly or any fear of any gang in Ireland. We saw the great

war through at gigantic cost; we are not going to quail before a handful of assassins in any part of the British Empire. Hand our ports over to Ireland, the gateway of Great Britain! They might starve us." Starve us they certainly would, and it has taken Mr George two years to enunciate this simple truth.

He has (or should have) many sins upon his conscience, and not the least of his sins is that sin of inaction of which he has been guilty in Ireland. As soon as the Armistice was declared, it was his business to formulate a strong policy and to restore law and order to Ireland. Being the victim of political expediency he has done precisely nothing. He has looked on while brave men and peaceable citizens were foully and treacherously done to death. And now, at the eleventh hour, he discovers the risks with which we are faced. He sees at last that in the next war we should lie at Ireland's mercy, that even in time of peace abroad Ireland might starve us out. And he says, boldly and clearly, that he is not going to quail. What does it mean? Is it politics or is it repentance, or is it merely the last comer? Does he see that the mass of British voters are opposed to murder? Is he sorry for the criminal neglect of the last years? Has a wise adviser got at his listening ear? We do not know, nor do Mr George's brave words give us much confidence for the future. We remember what he has done, or rather left undone, in Russia, and we quail, as he pretends that he does not, before the future. If only he would translate his words into acts there would be some hope for us. Unhappily this is not his practice, and maybe to-morrow he will make another speech which shall soothe the assassins. For the moment we must be content with the speech that he has given us. After all, a pious aspiration is perhaps better than nothing.

Yet if Mr George were the master of his own eloquence, if his mind were bound by the words that he speaks or by the opinions which he shapes, the logical conclusion of what he said at Carnarvon could be summed up in one word—Union. Truly if the Union did not exist to-day it would be necessary to invent it. If Ireland can defeat us in the next war, and in the meanwhile contrive our starvation, as she could if Mr Asquith, the chief begetter of the Easter Day Rebellion, had his way, then Ireland is as little to be trusted with a parliament as with a port. As Mr Lloyd George says, after Abraham Lincoln, "there is a limit to the disruptive rights of a minority." In a crisis of far less danger than our own, Lincoln fought until the revolting States were compelled to remain within the Union, and the task which lies ahead of us is the same task from which Lincoln did not shrink. As a result of his courage and firmness he has

won the admiration of Messrs George and Asquith, who each, after his own fashion, has fought hard for disruption. That they have not detected the signs of their own hypocrisy in this praise of a great Unionist says very little for their sense of history. But if Mr George's references to Abraham Lincoln and his policy are any more solid than the air which carried them away, then he cannot avoid pledging himself honestly and resolutely to the preservation of the Union, the one policy which can serve Great Britain and save Ireland. It remains for him to carry into action the speech which he made at Carnarvon, and after a necessary period of martial law to strengthen the ties which from the time of Pitt until 1906 bound Ireland tightly and firmly, in weal and in woe, to the British Empire.

Wherever we look at home or abroad we shall see the same signs of disintegration. And disintegration does not come of itself. The old romantic idea that history was controlled by "movements," omnipotent and inevitable, like floods or hurricanes, has long since been proved fallacious. The troubles which beset the human race are not made by natural forces. Behind every disaster, every access of murder and brutality, there are a human hand and a human brain. To discover whose are the hand and the brain is the only sure way of making the hand and the brain innocuous, and hitherto it has been hard, indeed, to ensure the discovery. However, with success the conspirators, become callous, have revealed their purposes, and an intelligent reading of history has shown us that, wherever there is rebellion there is a Jewish organisation to strengthen and support it. Here, then, is the danger that is always in our midst—the danger of Jewry, and we are careless indeed if we allow that danger to go unperceived and unguarded against.

The Jew has always fished in troubled waters. The disaster of the Christian has been his good fortune, and to those who are still in doubt as to his purpose and design we commend with confidence a recently published book, 'The Cause of World Unrest,' with an introduction by the editor of the 'Morning Post' (London: Grant Richards). In the pages of this book are traced with skill and ingenuity the plot contrived by the Jews against Christian civilisation, a plot which was inaugurated centuries ago, and which is still as active and as perilous as ever it was. Behind the Sinn Feiner in Ireland, behind the silly anarchist on the Clyde, there lurks the Jew, cynical and cunning, who is determined to turn to his own account the embarrassments of others. As it is now in Russia and in Ireland, so it was in France before the Revolution. Weishaupt and the Illuminati were the powers; the revolutionaries were merely the puppets. Thus is the truth sketched by the

Abbé Barruel in 1797: "You thought the Revolution ended in France, and the Revolution in France was only the first attempt of the Jacobins. In the desires of a terrible and formidable sect you have only reached the first stage of the plans it has formed for that general revolution, which is to overthrow all thrones, all altars, annihilate all property, efface all law, and end by dissolving all society." As it was in the time of the Abbé Barruel, so it is to-day. A terrible and formidable sect is attempting to get the world into its clutches, and the sect has changed neither in race nor in purpose in a century of years.

Crude as was the philosophy of Weishaupt or Spartacus, it was calculated to inflame the minds of the many fools. "Yes," said he, "princes and nations shall disappear from the face of the earth. Yes, a time shall come when man shall acknowledge no other Law than the great book of Nature. This Revolution shall be the work of our Secret Societies, and that is one of our Grand Mysteries." The language is the language of the dangerous humbug, and very well it has succeeded in the deception of human-kind. The following passage brings us still nearer to the design of the French Revolution and to the form assumed by the worst terror of all—the terror of Bolshevism. "When the object is a universal Revolution, all the members of these Societies, aiming at the same point and aiding one another, must find means of governing invisibly, and without any appearance of violent measures, not only the higher and more distinguished class of any particular state, but even of all stations, of all nations, of every religion, must insinuate the same spirit everywhere; in silence, but with the greatest possible activity, must direct the scattered inhabitants of the earth towards the same point."

There you have as good a description of Lenin's method as you could find anywhere. Working in silence and with the greatest possible activity the Jews of Russia, clever and malignant, have done their best to debauch the opinion and the morality of the whole world. They have purchased such tools everywhere as they thought would be useful, and they have not been held back from their fell purpose by any scruples of decency or pity. Murder and torture have been the common means by which they have achieved their ends, and they have found apt pupils in Ireland and in India. If so far they have not succeeded, it is because they have tried to cast their spell upon a partially enlightened world. But the danger is not overpast, and we shall save our civilisation only if we watch the activities of the Jewish race, and bear in mind the part that has been played by the wickeder sort of freemasonry and by the ritual of revenge in this prolonged attempt to ruin us all.

In these terms it is that

Barruel sketched the sinister principle upon which the Illuminati founded their hopes: "Want and opinion are the two agents which make all men act. Cause the want, govern opinions, and you will overturn all existing systems, however well consolidated they may appear." Again it is Lenin's principle. It is the principle which ensured the infamous French Revolution, as Mrs Webster has shown in her book. "Agents employed by the Duc d'Orléans deliberately bought up the grain," she tells us on excellent authority, "and either sent it out of the country, or concealed it in order to drive the people to revolt." It is the principle which will underlie every attempt at revolution that is likely to be made in the world, and it is the principle of the secret societies and of that part of Jewry which is closely related to them.

If we did not recognise the lineal descent of one set of conspirators from another, the revelations of one Nilus which have been set forth in 'The Jewish Peril' would appear strange indeed. The book contains the text of twenty-four Protocols of Meetings of the Learned Elders of Zion, and it shows how faithful have the modern conspirators remained to the teaching of the original Spartacus. "The protocols, in truth, are the plans of a secret government of Jewry for the return of this government to Zion and for the government of the whole world by Jewish dispensation." The way and the end are alike familiar. "The symbolism of the snake," says Nilus, "typifies a coiling and encircling movement, by which all Europe, and through Europe all the rest of the world, by the use of all forms of force, by wars of conquest, and by economic pressure, will be subjected to the influence of Jewry." That the statement of Nilus should carry weight is proved by the fact that he prophesied precisely the shape and the course which the revolution in Russia would take many years before the event, and declared that the predicted revolution would be carried out by a Jewish organisation, which brings us back to the terrible and formidable sect of the eighteenth century.

How, then, shall we combat this terrible and formidable sect? By watching its plots, wherever they be hatched, and by doing our best to frustrate them. Above all, it is essential to recognise that the evil that has been done in Russia has been done almost exclusively by Jews. Trotsky is a Jew, as is Lenin also, despite the denials of his friends. And from these examples we may learn, if it be not too late, how dangerous it is to admit Jews into our councils. Yet what have we seen during the last two years? The Jews supreme at the Conference of Paris, checking the aspirations of the Poles, for instance, because a strong Poland is not acceptable to Jewry, considering always the creed and the hopes of the

"race" before the advantage of the nations in which they were permitted to sojourn. As it was at Paris, so it is in our own Government. There are politicians in the British ministry who would not be there if their Semitic blood and connections had not given them a secret advantage. What is there of tradition or training or ability in Sir Alfred Moritz Mond, for instance, which should entitle him to the Presidency of the Board of Works? Why is Mr Montagu permitted to wreck the peace of India—a licence which would be granted, we hope and believe, to no Christian? Why is Mr Montagu's cousin, Sir Herbert Samuel, who at any rate is not ashamed of his own name, sent forth, a Jew himself, to reconcile the Arabs to an enforced and sudden influx of Hebrews, many of them Bolshevists? There is but one explanation of these anomalies, and that explanation is the influence wielded secretly and unscrupulously by the Semites who are allowed to live in our midst. In conclusion, we are faced by a peril which it would be absurd to overlook on the foolish plea of religious toleration. It is no matter of religion but of race, and the sooner we insist that the Jews, living peaceably in our midst, shall take no part, open or secret, in the government of the country in which they are privileged to dwell, the less risk we shall run of revolution and of Bolshevism.

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